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Indian Days
in the
Canadian Rockies

MRS. BEN KAKUITTS
RED WOMAN OR WIYA-SHA
CREE INDIAN WOMAN

AnE
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Indian Days
in the
Canadian Rockies

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By

Charles MARIUS BARBEAU

Illustrations by
W. LANGDON KIHN

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Introduction

Introduction

The American Indians once figured in the foreground of our history. Their numbers were large enough to command respect, and their martial ardour inspired fear in all who ventured uninvited across their frontiers in the limitless expanses of the new world. Those were the days of old, the days of early borderlands where everyone held his fate in his hands as a frail gift of Providence, the days of the *coureurs-des-bois,* the explorers and the fur traders—the real Indian days.

The age in which we ourselves now live is altogether different. It is an age of peace, comfort and security, an age so law-abiding, so commonplace that we must turn to the fertile imagination of our dreamers or to the font of our past records for any true romance and adventure. The ancient "free hunters" have long since disappeared, the game has grown scarce, the outposts of the fur trade have receded to the sub-Arctic regions, and the Indians have vanished out of sight, almost out of existence. To the great majority of the people on our eastern water-

sheds the native races of America are practically extinct, and "The Last of the Mohicans" of Fenimore Cooper closes a picturesque chapter that cannot be reopened.

In some distant parts of America, however, there are sanctuaries of wild life where the shades of bygone millenia still linger deeply. There it is still possible to follow the moose, the grizzly bear and the mountain goat in their primordial haunts, and to meet Indians along trails which they have not yet renounced in spite of law and regulations.

Perhaps nowhere can those survivors of the past be seen to better advantage than in the Rocky Mountains of Canada. The big game hunter with expensive outfits and excessive ambitions may select the outlying Cariboo and Cassiar districts in northern British Columbia, but the average visitor will prefer the southern and more wonderful ranges of the Selkirks and the Rocky Mountains proper at the headwaters of the Saskatchewan and Columbia rivers.

Here the wild animals of the forest have grown so tame in the vast national parks under the protection of the law that they have almost reverted to the pristine amenities of the Garden of Eden, where men, birds, quadrupeds and reptiles fraternized in blissful

friendliness. At times tourists can descry them within walking distance of the comfortable hotel at Banff, or at the salt licks near the motor road that crosses the Vermilion Pass. A few hundred Stonies, remnants of a once powerful nation of prairie hunters and warriors, now reside at Morley, to the east of Banff; and the Kootenays of the Selkirks and Rocky Mountains proper are now parked in reservations on the wonderful Kootenay Lakes and south of the summer resorts of Lake Windermere, on the upper Kootenay River.

If most people nowadays have little time to meander through the numberless chapters of ancient pioneer history, however fascinating some of them may be, it does not follow that our annals must forever remain a sealed book for us all. Some outstanding episodes are at times forcibly recalled to our memory. Last year, for instance, there was celebrated the centenary of David Thompson's foundation of a trading post at Lake Windermere after his adventurous dash over the unexplored passes, and the Kootenay Indians joined in a pageant commemorating his advent as the earliest explorer of their country. Picturesque stampedes take place every summer in the July celebrations at Banff, when the Stony warriors don their regalia, paint their faces, pitch

their tipis in a semi-circle at the foothills, mount their broncos and caracole in parades which are reminiscent of the buffalo hunt and the traditional challenges of ancient native warfare.

These are the "Indian Days" as we now understand them, in which memory delves into ancient experiences, the experiences of the real Indian days that are no more. Their interesting revivals remind us of the time when the white man, long predicted by the native seers, was first seen by the north-western tribes, of the bloody encounters between the Crees, the Blackfeet and the Stonies on the open plains, of the Piegan raids against the Kootenays, the Flatbows and the Salish of the uplands, and of the more recent appearance of gold diggers, outlaws and pioneers who overran the country after the fifties of the last century.

The present-day Indians of the western prairies and the Rocky Mountains are no longer what they used to be. They have dwindled in numbers; their ancient customs are gone, their character is lost. They are a vanishing race. In the white man's pageants or in silver screen views of the wild west, they may still appear to us, when garbed in buckskin and feathers, as spectacular personalities dwelling in a sphere apart from the rest of mankind; but when

visited at home, on the reserves, they seldom live up to the fanciful expectations we derive from literature and pictorial art.

"Reform and live like ourselves!" is the motto which the white patrons of the reservation Indian have coined for his use. But he cannot truly do so. Human nature has ways of its own which well-meaning reformers have seldom mastered; it is not changed in a day, except by miracles, for the past generations stubbornly survive in the present, just as coarse black hair and high cheek bones pass on from parent to offspring. Even if the red man could be made different to suit our purpose, would he care to undergo such a change, would he think it worth while? We may doubt it. Our impulses, interests and traditional illusions are part of our breeding. They can be welcomed without question by none but ourselves. An outsider, when he belongs to a stock that is too far removed from ours, cannot be bullied into accepting tales and beliefs which seem preposterous to him, standards of life which are not suited to his surroundings, and ideals which even with ourselves vary twice in a century and essentially belong to our evolution.

It is clear that the Indian, with his inability to preserve his own culture or to assimilate ours, is

bound to disappear as a race, if indeed he has not already found his way into the pious hands of museum archæologists. His passing is one of the great tragedies of the American continent. It is a sacrifice to the new Moloch—the white man who now dominates the planet, unwillingly crushing life wherever he tramples. Yet it remains unheralded for want of panegyrists, unregretted for want of outspoken sympathisers. The only tragedies that leave any impression are those which are suitably staged by artists and poets, and even the obliteration of a score of human races arouses little attention if it remains obscure and unspectacular.

We have tried in the following chapters to visualize the advent of the white man into the northwest from the Indian standpoint. It is our good fortune to be associated in this attempt with a young artist of great talent and perspicacity—Mr. W. Langdon Kihn, of New York, some of whose Indian portraits are here reproduced.

Sophisticated as are most of our twentieth century Indians, many of them still retain an attitude towards modern life and the white man's concerns which is likely to astonish the casual visitor. It was not without difficulty, for instance, that Mr. Kihn could induce some of the old Stonies and Kootenays to sit

for their portraits, when he lived among them on the occasion of last year's "Indian Days" and the "David Thompson's Centenary." His coloured portraits were so realistic, they brought out the character of the model so distinctly, that the Indians were painfully surprised; indeed they were shocked. "Here is a dangerous man," they muttered, removing themselves from the scene of danger. When invited to explain their meaning one of them confided, "In the old days there were strong medicines. A man would draw a picture of his enemy, whom he wanted to injure; he would draw it on a piece of bark or buckskin. Then he would add whatever he pleased—a rope around his neck or an arrow half buried in his heart. Everything happened as on the picture; the rope or the arrow would kill the man. The more perfect the resemblance, the stronger the medicine, the surer the effect." Portraits like those of Mr. Kihn therefore might prove dreadful magic. It was only too easy for the artist, if he meant mischief, to draw a rope, an arrow, a long knife, or a tomahawk, and the evil was done. The days of another Indian were numbered.

Fortunately for Mr. Kihn, however, the suspicion of witchcraft did not last very long. He was not the enemy of the Indians, but their friend. In the large

white man's town far to the east (New York) he was to show the portraits of all the important Indians to the *King George* and the *Boston* people.

One chief named Ehattisaht would not sit for his portrait. No, he would not. The fee accepted by the others, for one thing, did not suit his super-excellency. A half-breed boy acting as an interpreter approached him, saying, "What's the matter, Sam?" But the old chief was angry; he would not reply. "Just think! Sam," continued the boy; "All the portraits of the big Indians, the Blackfoot, the Stony, the Kootenay, will go to the white man's town together; they will be placed on the walls all around, as if in a council. The people will come in hundreds just to look at them. 'Where is Sam?' That is what they will ask; but there will be no Sam." The notion of being slighted aroused Sam. He would pose for his portrait at any price in order that he might appear among the chiefs of all nations wherever they happened to sit.

No portrait in Mr. Kihn's collection is of greater interest to us than that of Calf-Child, whose other name is Hector Crawler. For Calf-Child, a Stony of Morley Reservation, is not only endowed with a remarkable personality, but he is the most noted medicine-man of the present generation in his tribe.

He is also a great healer. Indeed his ability to cure diseases is nothing short of miraculous, we are told. Not a few white residents of Banff share the popular belief as to his uncanny powers. His fame has travelled far, even across the frontiers; patients have come to him from distant Utah for treatment and healing. Cured, they buy from him a magic feather, for a blessing and a protection. When the giant thunder birds of the mountains flap their wings and smite the earth with their thunderbolts, Calf-Child's disciples plant their feather in their hair, daub their cheeks with white paint and brave the tempest with impunity.

To the reader some of the following chapters—*An Indian Seer,* and *Tchatka,* for instance—may seem pure fiction or Indian fairy tales. Yet they are not. They are true narratives of Indian lives substantially as reported from native sources. Beeny, the seer, was perhaps the first Indian of the uplands who foretold the coming of Europeans and obtained vague notions of the Christian faith. In his quality of juggler, he was only too anxious to show his power, to predict the future, and to accomplish marvels that would astonish his people; and his theme was the white man—the "Sky being" as he termed him. He was imposing on the popular credulity and unconsciously at the same time on his own.

Strange as it may seem, the world is full of wonders to the unspoilt Indian. The supernatural is part of his everyday life—not a remote potentiality, as with us. Ghosts and spirits dwell near at hand and their earthly visits are not infrequent. Monsters sometimes rise at night from underground, and the credulous folk tremble, unaware that only a wooden mask and other ingenious contrivances are being cleverly operated by a sorcerer whose art it is to startle others. Death may be followed by resurrection, and the manitous, even the white man's God, may be seen face to face in broad daylight. Not so do we believe. In the past centuries we have grown sceptical. Anything beyond the range of vision or experience is dismissed. Even in matters of religion and faith we seem to draw the line unconsciously. Rituals and beliefs appear only in church or when death is near; we neglect them in our every-day lives.

Sincere or not, the prophet Calf-Child is but a modern imitation of Beeny and other ancient seers, whose experiences are described in the following chapters. Once power was given his ancestors through the medicine pipe and magic bundle; but Christianity has ruined it, ruined both pipe and bundle. God, the maker, therefore, appeared to him

while he was sleeping on a mountain long ago. God appeared four nights in a vision, giving him the magic feather, daubing his cheeks with white paint, teaching him how to cure sickness by breathing upon it, how to sing, dance and beat the drum for the welfare of his people. So he has done ever since; so he has tried to uplift his tribe by eradicating the influence of alien missionaries and reviving the old customs.

Beeny and Calf-Child both belong to the class of seers, visionaries and healers of men. Similar in pattern as may be their sky revelations, they differ radically in their purpose. One lived before the appearance of Europeans, the other long after. To Beeny the newcomer was a messiah, the standard-bearer of a golden age just dawning. But Calf-Child has lived too late to harbour such an illusion. The white stranger is not a saviour, but an invader, a gaoler. He is the curse of the red man, the curse that means death and extinction. What must the Indian do to stave off the inevitable? He must restore the old law under which his ancestors thrived through countless ages dating back to the origin of the world itself.

I. An Indian Seer

I. An Indian Seer

WHEN the snow began to thicken on the ground, in the month of the Round-moon (February), the sorcerer Beeny was lying on a yellow cedar mat inside his hunting cabin near Trout-Lake. No one but his wife and closest relatives were allowed inside, and it was impossible for outsiders to tell whether he was ill or merely downhearted. The news, however, spread abroad that "his heart was sick with grief" over the triumph of his rival Gustlee, an older sorcerer, who had displayed superior skill in the last witchcraft contests of the autumn festivals.

Gustlee, whose habit was to take his cues from the west coast jugglers, had emerged from the earth like a ghost in company with the dreaded monster the Double-headed-Snake. His followers had "fallen dead" with fright, and by sheer magic he had brought them back to life. The famous trick of resurrection was not unknown to Beeny; it had always vastly appealed to his fancy and goaded his ambition. He could not reconcile himself to the idea of seeing his

rival snatch it out of his hands as it were, before he himself could master all its secrets. His defeat was a disgrace; it put him to shame before the assembled tribes of the Mild-people and the Spring-people, and he cared no longer to show his face in broad daylight.

The news went forth from Beeny's hut, one evening, that he was ill, very ill, at the point of death. "He has not long to live now," was the word; "a green fluid is streaming out of his mouth and he is unable to speak."

Medicine-men were invited to sing their incantations and shake their bird-like wooden rattles over him. In spite of all efforts, however, he wasted away until there was no hope. His ailment was the strangest one, truly unlike anything ever known before. After the green fluid had flowed from his mouth, he would be lifted into mid-air as if his body were lighter than a dried leaf in the wind. It was difficult at times to hold him down to his couch. At night he would rise from the ground and walk along the walls like a beetle or under the roof like a fly. The native doctors could no longer understand; they confessed their impotency. "Evil spirits," they declared, "dwell in his body, pernicious and stubborn spirits. They cannot be drawn out with the hands; they cannot be blown away out of reach. Perhaps

they are of a new kind, for ghost-like beings with a white skin have been seen far off to the east and far off to the west."

A chief of the neighbouring tribe, the Spring-people, suggested, maybe with evil intent, "Gustlee is the only medicine-man able to cure him, for he can do anything, even bring back the people to life, as we have seen." Gustlee therefore was summoned to visit the village of the Mild-people for the purpose. But when he appeared at Beeny's door it was to meet with an insult. His visit was considered as sheer impudence and the skin door flap was swung into his face. Enraged, he declared, "Beeny is too ill to recover. Shame and jealousy have gnawed at his heart. He shall die! That's what I have to say."

So it happened, as the most powerful sorcerer of the country had predicted. Before the moon was full again, Beeny had ceased to live, in the belief of all. But his death was as mysterious as his disease. He disappeared from his couch one night. In the morning his body was gone. Steps leading away from the cabin could be seen outside in the fresh snow. The new tracks grew fainter and fainter until no vestige was left. Many trees at this spot lay scattered on the ground, some small and others large. Apparently they had been pulled up from the top,

and large holes were left at the roots. Here Beeny's raiment was found, hanging from the limbs of a jack-pine. "Strange, very strange!" declared the people who had gathered from all around; "he has died and gone up into the sky against his will."

Beeny's relatives would not go into deep mourning, in defiance of custom. "No, he is not dead," they said; "he is only gone up;" and they kept looking for him around Trout-Lake. Some of the hunters scattered along the moose trails in the timber lands, while others searched all over the mountain paths where he used to hunt the wild goats. No trace of him. Still they would not give up; they would not mourn for him.

The summer went by, then the winter. The snow melted again, and Beeny failed to return. In spite of all, his relatives kept postponing the funeral rites. The people murmured, "They are out of their minds. A great misfortune is sure to befall them, and perhaps all our folk throughout the land."

In the Moon-of-buds (May), the women were out gathering the sap of jack-pine. They noticed something weird at the edge of a clearing in the woods. It looked as though monsters had fought a terrific battle, torn holes in the ground and turned the forest into a jumble. Tree tops were buried in large

MARY ISAACS
GOOD SINGER OR KSOK-KLA-KLU-UK
KOOTENAY INDIAN WOMAN

cavities and the roots stuck up in the air. A large pitch-pine was twisted like a rope of cedar bark. The sap gatherers ran back to camp, out of their wits, and warned the men. "Oh! it is so frightful!" pointing in the direction whence they had come. The men picked up their bows and arrows and their war clubs, prepared for danger, and started out for the clearing at the edge of the forest.

There they stood, beholding the limbs and trunks of trees in a wild tangle, and they were puzzled. A dead body, like that of an animal, hung from the forks of a large jack-pine, on both sides. They gazed at it in wonder. Was it a mere corpse or was it a spirit? They began to chop the tree all around with their stone axes, in beaver-like fashion. A cedar board suddenly fell among them with a loud report. It was broad and short, and covered with signs and scrolls in black and red. They thought of running away to safety. No sooner had they begun to chop again than a white cloth with shiny discs tumbled down along the tree trunk. It looked uncanny, as nothing like it had ever been known to exist.

When the tree seemed on the point of falling, a noise came out of the forks above. The whizzing sound, whistle-like, resembled the voice of a ghost. There was no time to lose; the workers dropped

their axes and took to flight. After a time they returned to investigate. A body had fallen from the tree, the body of a dead man whose face and hands were ghost-like—that is, covered with a coat of white paint. Lo! it was Beeny's body, sunk into the ground up to the hips and turned to the east instead of to the west. The limbs were cold and half dessicated, the skin soft and dry like buckskin. They dug it out with sharp wooden sticks.

Warning travelled ahead to the village, while the corpse was placed on the mysterious cedar board, covered with the white cloth, and carried in procession along the pack-trail to the cabin where the relatives sat in mournful expectancy.

Beeny's remains were no sooner laid on the cedar board at the back of the cabin than a dirge was intoned for the comfort of the departed soul. A dance, the dance of the dead, started outside, and messengers were despatched to the tribes far and near with the usual summons for the incineration of a noted chief.

The throng of mourners, criers and dancers swelled to a considerable size before three days had passed, and the pyre for the last funeral rites stood on a mound opposite the lodge. "We are near the Cave of the Dead," the song went on; "the Cave of the Dead.

The trail is bad. We fear we are lost. Here we have come to the dark river . . ." and the skin drums resounded loudly in the chorus that followed.

Suddenly the singing ceased, the dancing stopped. A strange noise came from the body lying in state. The board creaked, and distinct knocks, two, three, four, were heard. It was surprising, startling. Something was wrong with the board, the board fallen from the tree and covered with black and red scrolls. Every one remained motionless. The board creaked again; then it sizzled *sh——, sh——*. The creaking and the sizzling alternated for a while, for a long time, the morning, then the whole afternoon. The mourners inside the house watched the corpse expectantly, and the crowd outside silently waited for news.

A youth of the Mild-people's tribe, whose face and hair were almost white from birth, came in, sat close to the corpse and listened still more intently than the others. Then he whispered, "I hear something, I hear him singing, inside his body." Still no sound could be heard by anyone else, even by those squatting very near. Again the youth said, "So it is, I hear his voice, I hear his song, *Hahaee-he neebahu-dju tisnahay . . .*" After some time the people around could hear the song. It came from the corpse,

through the white cloth with bright discs. Gradually it grew more distinct. The youth, and then the assistants, began to hum, little by little, singing in unison, *Hahaee-he neebahu-dju . . .*"

The friends of the late sorcerer brought cedar mats to cover the floor, and laying out caribou skins, they placed the corpse upon them in the centre of the lodge. Then they broke the funeral board to fragments and threw the splinters through the smoke hole.

The pale-faced youth then said, "I have seen his hands move, his hands, his feet and his body." No sign of life, however, could yet be perceived by the other relatives and friends. Still, it seemed as if the hands, the feet, the body, even the head, were really moving a little, a very little. Indeed the body could be seen moving up and down, from side to side, after a long while. Beeny beyond all doubt was still alive. Fully resurrected, he now sat up and remained motionless on the caribou skins. Then he stood up by himself. His friends and relatives inside were awe-struck; they could not believe their eyes. It was all so wonderful!

Word quietly went out from the funeral lodge to the throng gathered without, "He has come back from the sky; he is alive again." Silence gave way

to excitement. Speechless at first, the people began to whisper, "Now Gustlee may hide his face in shame. He has been outdone truly, utterly. He brought back to life those whom his Double-headed monster had frightened to death; that is true, and we wondered at his power; Beeny went out to concealment. But now, it is all so different! Beeny has died; we know that he has. He went to the sky, where he has stayed spring, summer and winter. Now he is returned and alive. Dead one day, alive the next. Who would believe it? Who could not see him there, sitting and standing? What sorcerer has ever done such a thing before, restore life, not in others, but in himself after his body was dry enough for the funeral pyre? Incredible, yet true. So we believe. Let Gustlee go into hiding in his turn. Perhaps he may some time do something as wonderful. Let him die! and we shall see whether he can go to the sky and return alive after many seasons."

The youth kneeling near the caribou skin now declared, "The Master has spoken to me; he has spoken right into my heart." Yet the Mild-people around marvelled at it, since they had not heard any word spoken or seen any movements of the lips. "He has spoken to my heart," continued the youth, "and made me the servant of his words, his own mouth-piece

to his own people, the Mild-people, the Spring-people and other people beyond the lakes and the mountains."

The resurrected sorcerer now looked around at his relatives and friends. His eyes moved for the first time, and they moved very weirdly, like glittering eyes in a wooden mask. Then he spoke, but his words conveyed no meaning; his syllables sounded strangely to the ears. Now they could see that he had forgotten all about their language in his prolonged absence; his idiom now was that of the Sky-beings of his visitation. So they gazed wonderingly at one another.

Calling his new friend, the youth, he stooped over him and held his head between his hands. Then he drew an awl of polished bone from his bosom, pressed it into the ears of him who would be the "servant of his words," and rubbed saliva on both sides of his head, to make him understand the language of Sky-beings, so that he might transmit many hidden truths to the people.

"Here are the Master's words," interpreted the young man, still kneeling at the feet of the inspired sorcerer: "My speech is that of the People-of-the-Sky, who live far to the east and far to the south. No one can understand it but myself and my disciple whose ears have just been opened."

The sorcerer then began to sing and dance. The words of his new song were again explained to the people, "I have had a dream, the dream of death, and my mind embraced the whole world."

Then he stood near the doorway, in view of all the people, and spoke in the mysterious idiom of Sky-beings which no one but his interpreter, now squatting at his feet, could understand and explain, "My body was sore to the point of crumbling away, many moons ago," he said. "Then I saw a ladder alongside of my body, a ladder reaching up from my cedar mat into the sky. A voice at the top called me up; that is why I started to climb. When I looked down I stood at the tree tops. I tried to touch them with my right hand; that is how the trees were pulled out of the ground. Brothers and friends have you seen the trees uprooted?" "Yes," replied the people inside and outside the house, "we saw the trees that were uprooted." "I dropped my raiment, I dropped it, and it fell upon the limbs of a tree. Was it lost or was it found?" Again the crowd responded in chorus, "We found it on the limbs of a tree."

The seer resumed the tale of his sky vision, "I climbed the ladder for a night and a day. It was only my shade that was climbing, for my body was left behind. It fell between the forks of a tree. It was

dead. I could not get into the Sky all at once, only little by little. My shade pierced the sky vault slowly, slowly, even as a new-born child comes slowly into this world. When it was half-way above, I beheld the four corners of Heaven. At the point where the sun sets was a very old man, as tall as a tree, as white as snow. Many, oh so many people, all pale-faced, sat everywhere; but they were all like wood carvings, mute and motionless. No one took any notice of me. Then I turned to the east and beheld the spirits with white garments who stood near the opening where the sun rises every morning. They alone in sky-land moved their hands, their feet, their faces and their bodies as we do. In their hands they were beating skin drums while they danced in circles and sang, "Sun, good Sun, when is it that you began to rise and set in the sky?"

Here again the seer interrupted his narrative to dance and sing the song of his vision, "Sun, good Sun . . ." and the people liked it so greatly that they joined in the song and the dance. Meanwhile he re-entered his lodge and lay down on his couch. His body seemed to shiver and stiffen. The singing and dancing ceased. He was dead again. The mourners began to moan and sigh, as they always do at the funeral of a chief.

The next day, however, the seer came to life again, and he spoke to the tribes in the same mysterious idiom, through his interpreter. "This is the second day of the shortest span of time" (the week), he said. "I shall tell you of the two head-chiefs of the Sky, the Father and the Son. The name of the Father is Old Man. He has always been, he is as ancient as the world. Yet he cannot die, for he is a manitou, the oldest sky manitou. Listen to his song, brothers and friends. It is a wonderful song, the song of Old Man: 'Since the World first grew I have lived until now. Old as I am, I remain strong. The manitous of the mountain peaks, the manitous of the canyons, the manitous of the wind, the manitous of the trees and the waters are all in me. From them, from all Nature, I am strong, I am everlasting. I can give life again. Those who sing my song shall stand up from amongst the dead . . ."

The song of Old Man was so novel, so wonderful that the whole assembly of the Mild-people and the Spring-people began to hum it, faintly at first, then altogether in unison. They sang and danced again that day until sunset, when the seer withdrew once more inside his lodge and lay down lifeless on his mat. So it happened on the second day of the "short span" (the week), the second day of his resurrection.

The next day, when he resumed the recital of his vision, the people could see the white cloth with shining discs resting on his left arm. At his feet lay a bowl of mountain goat horn full of clear water. "This is the third day of the short span," he said, and he touched his forehead with his right hand, then both his shoulders and his bosom in turn. His disciple imitated his motions, and so did the people all around. Thus the Sign of the Cross first came to be known on the uplands. "Listen!" he continued, "my dream now was of the Son, *Zazeekry,* who stands next to Old Man among the Sky manitous, and holds a tree (the cross) and a bowl of water in his hands. This is what the manitou Zazeekry told me, 'Very soon a great plague shall visit your people; the earth shall crumble to pieces and fire shall leap out of the crevices. Ghosts shall rise out of the ground, and the big sky monster shall swallow the sun and the moon. Darkness and smoke shall prevail everywhere. Go and tell your people! They are all sinners, that is why! They are not baptized, they know nothing of my Cross, they do not marry in the proper way, they spend their lives in the *potlatch,* and when they die, their bodies are hung in the trees, then burned to charcoal on the pyre. Your people are bad, they are heathens. That is why the earth shall

break up and burn to cinders.' Then Zazeekry poured the water of baptism from his bowl on to my head, and he said, 'Beeny—Mind-all-over-the-world—, this shall be your name, for you are the first to discover who I am. You must go down the sky-ladder and return to earth, to save your tribe, your tribe and all the tribes that welcome the Truth. Baptize the people, give them new names, tell them to repent and show them the right way.' Then I travelled all around the sky, I stood at the four corners of the world and learned the new ways of life. The time came for me to return to you, my people. I sang the song of Old Man, the song of life, *Hahaee-he neebahu-dju* . . ., and I scaled down the sky ladder. You have heard the words of Zazeekry. If you do not repent, if you do not change your ways, you shall all perish. The plague and the fire are near. I have come back from the sky to save you. Here is my bowl of water, the water of Baptism."

The people now were deeply stirred, for the Truth had dawned upon their minds; they were bad people, sinners; they must repent, change their hearts. It was a great disillusion, like innocence first lost. They bent their heads before Beeny, their messiah, without knowing just how they should repent or mend their ways.

The water in the bowl of mountain goat horn first served for the baptism of the pale-faced disciple, whose mission it was to interpret the master's sacred idiom. "Samalee," declared the seer, "this shall be your name, you the faithful servant of my words." The other converts came in turn to receive, with the water on their foreheads, the new names that meant new life—Malee, Lay-o, Aleyksee, Zeely, Zalemaw . . . The Mild-people, the Spring-people and many other visitors from the neighbouring Takullie tribes came forth one by one and were baptized.

The ritual no sooner ended than the members of the new fraternity wanted to know where Gustlee had gone. "Let him come and be baptized!" they said, "It may soon be too late." But Gustlee was nowhere to be found. His turn had arrived to hide his face, perhaps to discover greater marvels and outdo his rival Beeny in the witchcraft contests of the coming autumn festivals.

* * *

In the remaining days of the "short span"—the first Christian week firmly installed among the pagans of British Columbia—, Beeny revealed to his followers the entrancing episodes of his Sky visitation. Thus he laid the foundation of a hybrid faith, a religion consisting of Indian and European notions

intertwined, which was to spread over wide expanses between the eastern ridges of the Rocky Mountains, the Columbia River and the west coast, and sway the natives for over a generation.

The wonder of it all is that this event antedated the labours of missionaries, even the appearance of the earliest white men along the perilous trails of the northern uplands. How could a seer like Beeny, in the fastness of his remote country, dream of heaven, baptize neophytes and establish pseudo-Christian ethics in a manner which reminds one more of a Catholic missionary than a pagan of the mountains? Time rubs off many connecting links, distance obscures our perception, and it is not possible yet to unravel the puzzle. Beeny, in his prolonged absence after his disappearance, may have travelled to some distant point, though not as far as the trade outposts. From the very impurity of his mystic notions, from his tale of marvels, it seems more likely that in the beginning at least, he laboured under the delusions of hearsay. Many stories from the lips of other Indians, of catholicized half-breeds from the east—Cree or Iroquois—, and of French *coureurs-des-bois* may have reached his ears, possibly through the "free hunters" who resorted by the score to the Rocky Mountains even before the time when Thompson, in 1807, first

wintered at Lake Windermere. A stimulus once provided, his imagination may also have elaborated other themes about the coming of the white people—"the sky beings," as he called them—, which must have filtered through the mountain passes at a very early date.

From oral accounts preserved to this day among the Indians we learn that Beeny fell into a trance and died again at the end of the first week after his resurrection. But he was dead only one day. When he returned from Heaven it was to bring back fresh enlightenment to his new converts. "This is what Zazeekry has said," he related; "You shall not kill, you shall not lie, you shall not steal, you shall not have more than one wife, and you shall observe *deemawse* (dimanche, Sunday). This is the Law of the Five fingers." Then he summoned them to look at the three magic gifts he had brought back from the sky—the white cloth, the prayer board and the tree of the cross .

"The white cloth is here," he said, "the white cloth of Heaven. It is a blessing, for it shall cure diseases and drive away the big plague." Showing a small board with peculiar coloured signs, he raised his voice, "Now behold the prayer board!" he declared. "Here are the seven notches, the days of the short

span. You shall work six days and rest on the seventh. That is what Zazeekry does. So you must do. Here are the signs (the Scriptures). You shall look at them, for you must all pray and be saved from the big fire." The third amulet which Beeny showed to his followers was a small spruce tree carved to represent a cross. "This is the Cross of Heaven, the Cross of Penance," he explained. "When you see it you must repent, you must do penance. A ten days' fast, this is what you must observe before you begin the big Indian dances."

After he had thus spoken, the seer began to sing, "Every time death strikes me, I stretch out my hand and pray, 'Great Father in the sky, lift me up to your side!'" This was the song of the sky ladder, the song which from the first was so great a favourite among the Mild-people and the Spring-people. "Great Father, lift me up to your side!" They repeated it a hundred times with Beeny, then they danced to its tune. They danced so long and desired so frantically to ascend to Heaven that they worked themselves into a frenzy before the sun had set beyond the high mountains to the west.

The Moon-of-berries (June) now rose in the sky. It was the season when the people every year moved from the forest camps to their villages near the

canyons for the salmon fishing. The Mild-people were ready to start on the trail from Trout-Lake, when they learnt that Beeny, their leader, would not carry a pack on his back, would not even walk. It seemed more fitting that a seer like him should be carried on a litter and shown great reverence.

Beeny urged his litter-bearers to walk slowly, very slowly, for he might go up to the sky again at any moment; he held on to life only by a shred. At night in camp he resumed his singing and dancing to the tune, "Great Father in the sky, lift me up to your side!" and his followers again danced themselves into ecstatic frenzy.

The trail became firm and smooth, the next day; it ran across beautiful prairies and dry jack-pine flats on the heights. Beeny wanted to walk; and his attendants were glad to let him down. "Now I can walk; truly, I can!" he declared, and he started off very cautiously, as a child attempting its first steps. He had not taken four steps when he sank into the ground with a moan, sank right up to the waist. His escort gathered round, saying, "The time has not come, yet; it is all too soon for him, our Sky leader." With great difficulty they dug a trench into the hard gravel around him and finally succeeded in lifting him out of the pit. Again they carried him on the

litter, carried him from camp to camp. They sang and danced with him at night, beside the camp fire, until they reached their village near the River-rapids.

Many delegates from the tribes beyond the frontiers arrived for the *potlatches*—the great autumn festivals—, at the time of the Grizzly-bear-Moon. But Beeny warned the Mild-people, "Now, there shall be no more *potlatches,* for the *potlatch* is the backbone of evil. Tell the delegates from afar that they must learn the Truth and repent like the others. Else danger is near!"

These strangers knew nothing of the magic white cloth, the small spruce tree and the bowl of water; they only gasped in sheer amazement. "Why! Give up the *potlatch!*" they thought to themselves, "we would just as soon lie down and die. . . Oh, the man is mad who would have us change our ways!" Beeny heard their thoughts from across the canyon just as clearly as if they had been whispered into his ear. So he called his disciple Samalee. "Go out!" he said, "and pick up dry twigs from the saskatoon-berry bush—ten altogether." Samalee did as he was bid and picked up ten twigs and tied them together in a bunch with the root of a spruce tree. "Very well," said the seer; "Now you must go to the camps across the canyon and tell the strangers that they shall see

wonders before the day is done, if they only come to the house of the mad man of the Mild-people."

Before the sun had set, the visitors, perplexed, walked in single file into Beeny's house. "I know your hidden thoughts," said their host; "for my name is Beeny—Mind-all-over-the-World. You mock at my advice when I say that you should repent and change your manner of life. You, people from beyond the river, you still have many things to learn! You must know my power, the power that has been given me by Old Man, the great Father in the Sky." The strangers seemed much confused, at pains to conceal their embarrassment. "Now this is a great moment in your lives, a turning point," added the seer. "I will put these twigs in my mouth, ten of them, these twigs as they are, dry and leafless for the winter."

While the twigs were still within Beeny's mouth, many people in breathless expectancy crowded into the house. Their host now seemed to awaken. Behold! the twigs that he pulled out of his mouth were no longer dry and leafless, but covered with blossoms and young leaves; they were not saskatoon-berry branches as they stand in the winter, but rather as they are swayed in the wind, after the Moon-of-Leaves. The people could hardly believe their eyes and would not tire gazing at the blossoms.

"I will try it over again," said Beeny. He put the twigs back into his mouth, slowly pressing in the blossoms and the leaves, and he danced with the members of his new Sky fraternity. When he drew the twigs out, no more blossoms were left, no blossoms, but ripe fruit instead, the purple fruit of the saskatoon. The people now began to whisper, "How marvellous! We used to know the seasons and the wild bushes. But now their ways are all so different, since a dry stick can bear blossoms and fruit! How is he able to accomplish these tricks, the sorcerer of the Mild-people?"

Beeny, who followed their thoughts, now explained, "It is not my hand, but that of the great Father in the Sky that does these marvels. All the seasons are the same to him; all the trees and the bushes in the forest are his servants, acting at his command. Now that he has changed the ways of the saskatoon before your eyes, will you not change yours before it is too late? Will you not believe his Truth, give up the *potlatch,* repent and pray before the great fire sweeps the earth?"

Days and moons after the miracle of the dry saskatoon twigs, there were still some disbelievers—Gustlee and his old-fashioned followers—who only laughed at the notion of Sky-beings and still called

Beeny, "the mad man with a smooth face." This is why the seer again sang his song, "Great Father, lift me up to your side!" fell into a swoon, died and went up to Heaven. When he came back to life after three days, he said, "I had a dream; my dream was of Zazeekry; and this is what Zazeekry told me, 'At mid-day to-morrow, when the sun sits in the middle of the sky, it shall disappear, and darkness shall spread like a cedar mat over the land.'"

The Mild-people were frightened at the news. "Danger!" they said, "the earth may break into pieces, the big fire may leap through its crevices;" and they remained within their houses, behind closed doors, dancing and singing their sacred songs. Those who remained obdurate and boastful took up their hatchets and went out to cut long fishing poles for their salmon hooks. At noon, a cloud seemed to cover the sun; a shadow passed over their heads. They looked up. They could see no cloud in the sky. But lo! darkness was slowly covering up the sun. The earth was veiled in obscurity. They stood under trees and, for fear of death, tried to sing and dance in the manner of the new Sky fraternity. Now their minds were changed; they believed in Beeny's power, in the truth of his very name "Mind-all-over-the-World," for not only could he visit Heaven but also foretell what was to happen on the morrow.

HECTOR CRAWLER
CALF CHILD OR TATANKA-CINCA
HEAD MEDICINE MAN OF STONY TRIBE

From this day on Beeny's good fortune as a founder of religion could not be doubted. The new creed and observances steadily gained ground from moon to moon, and the size of his following grew apace. The driving force of his precepts and the threat of plague and fire impelled popular imagination into surrender. More neophytes from far and near stooped at his feet on the first day of every short span, to receive the water of newness from the horn bowl, along with a name from the sky. The trinity of the magic white cloth, spruce tree and prayer board travelled about the country as tokens from Heaven and a pledge of security. Thoroughly humbled and unable to retrieve his reputation, the sorcerer Gustlee dared no more show his face in the open, though his pride rebelled at the notion of final defeat.

The duties of dancing, preaching and establishing reforms soon overtaxed the abilities of the zealous messiah and his unfailing Samalee. More truth-bearers, more disciples were needed, and the need was pressing, urgent. Beeny perforce had to learn his native language, had to speak directly to the people in the vernacular, after using the idiom of the Sky-people for two years in his mystic utterances.

Then he trained new disciples and sent them to other tribes, even to strange natives outside the pale

of friendship. "This is the Truth which you must publish everywhere," he said to them:—"Those who repent, those who pray and dance, those who yield to the new ways of life, the ways of the Sky-beings, shall be saved from death, for the earth has not long to last. It shall break to pieces. He who refuses to abide by your words shall fall into the crevices and burn to cinders in the great fire below, soon, very soon." So did these modern apostles of the new light peregrinate throughout the land, down the Fraser River, down the Columbia, down the Skeena and the Nass, as far as the west coast, as far as the plains, bringing everywhere salvation together with the enchanted pass-words, "Those who adopt the new ways of life shall be saved."

* * *

Moons travelled across the deep blue sky of the uplands, they travelled in turn, from the Moon-of-Cold, the shortest in the long span (the year), to the Moon-of-Salmon, the most beneficent of all for its bounties and comforts. Beeny's preaching, singing and dancing in the presumed manner of Sky-beings became the law of the country, the mystic barrier that kept off fire and pestilence.

At the time of the salmon run, when the fishermen usually gather at the edge of the canyons to capture

and smoke enough fish for the needs of the coming year, only a few of the Mild-people and their neighbours resorted to the fishing platforms. Not many of their women went out to the fruit patches, in the Moon-of-the-Groundhog. Singing and dancing was more important in the eyes of the great majority, who would rather resort to the seer's lodge than to the smoke-houses, or the berry patches along the mountain slopes. So it came about that the stock of provisions seemed dangerously low in the underground caches when the winter set in.

The members of the Beeny fraternity gave up dancing in the Moon-of-Canoe-making, and began to look for food from house to house. But they met with disappointment. Smoked salmon was scarce, and barely a few rolls of dried huckleberries were left. Roots, barks and mosses from the limbs of trees did not suffice to ward off hunger. Before the Moon-of-the-Melting-snow famine prevailed among converts and pagans alike, one of the worst famines in many years.

Gustlee and a few of his followers now returned from their hunting-grounds, loaded with salmon packs, rolls of dried fruit and boxes of *oolachen* oil. They invited the members of the Sky fraternity to a great banquet, for they knew them to be famished

and downhearted. Beeny smarted at the notion of encountering his rival at a time when misery distracted even the most faithful of his friends. But the counsels of hunger were imperious; no one would stand aside, and he himself felt the pangs of privation. Thus, after many seasons of estrangement, the two factions of the Mild-people once more sat together around the same fire.

The guests in the feast-house had no sooner eaten their portions than Gustlee shook the bird-like wooden rattle in his hand, after the manner of sorcerers when they sing their incantations. "Look at us," he said to Beeny and his followers; "we have plenty of food for the barren season."—"Verily, it is so," replied the guests. "If we have food," rejoined the sorcerer, "it is because we fish for salmon in the Salmon-moon; our women gather and dry berries in due season; and we have groundhog pelts to barter for *oolachen* oil from the coast people. We follow the wisdom of our forefathers, that is why we are well-fed and happy."—"Verily, it is so, verily!" repeated First-in-the-Sky, a foremost member of the Sky fraternity.

Beeny seemed greatly perturbed. His militant spirit was roused by the veiled challenge of his rival, now that his hunger was appeased. "We were

hungry, it is true!" he retorted, "but we shall be saved when the plague and the fire visit our country." At the familiar words of fire and salvation, confidence seemed to reassert itself in the ranks of the religious fraternity. Restless, the pale-faced seer began to sing his sacred song, "*Hahaee-he neebahu-dju,* Great Father of the Sky . . ." and he came near the point of falling into a trance. "O you, friends across the fire," he solemnly declared, "you have not seen, you have not heard! Where did you live all this time?"

"Once, many moons ago," replied Gustlee, "I brought back to life the Spring-people whom the Double-headed-monster had killed. I did it. Then Beeny went into the sky after his death and was able to restore his own life. And the people wondered at our powers. But why is it that we always hear the same thing repeated now, the same thing over and over again, moon after moon? Why is it that there is no end to your singing and dancing like madmen? Why is it that you vex the people by refusing to pay your *potlatch* debts? Why is it that you forsake the customs of our forefathers, the customs that ensure honour and livelihood? Why is it? Tell me, now that I have entertained you at my feast!"

With uncanny confidence Beeny asserted, "A great

change is coming! Have you not seen, have you not heard, strange things?" And he repeated the same question several times, every time growing more excited, more inspired at the idea of a world of unseen realities.

Gustlee, by a swift manœuvre known only to great sorcerers, tried to outwit his rival. "Yes, yes," he exclaimed; "Yes, I had a dream. I have seen, I have heard . . ."—"What is it?" queried Beeny defiantly, "What was your dream, your evil dream?"

Gustlee quietly related his dream, while shaking his rattle, "In my dream I travelled as fast as the wind over the tree tops; I travelled over lakes, over forests, over prairies, without discovering anything, anything I cared for. Then I went up the mountain slopes, I climbed the crags. There I noticed a village unlike anything I had ever seen before, the village of the Kannawdzets, the small people that are sometimes heard near the mountain tops by the hunters of wild goats. The sight of them alone means death to a man. I gazed at their wooden masks, I listened to their dancing songs while they pulled my hair, pulled my skin robe. But still I did not die, because it was my mind that contemplated their faces, not my eyes. I was only dreaming a dream that is true. People of my tribe, let me warn you: it shall be an

evil day when those Kannawdzets decide to scale down the mountains and visit our valleys. Now that I have related my dream, let Beeny speak forth, if he has anything new to say. We know his Old Man, we know Zazeekry, the manitous that have forsaken him when he was hungry. Is there anything else he can tell?"

Here was the challenge. Beeny looked up to the sky and declared, "I had a dream, too. My mind flew across the sky-vault straight to the east, and I saw, I saw . . ."— "What is it that you have seen?" derisively enquired the sorcerer, "the white cloth, the spruce tree or the horn-bowl. . . So we do know, so you always repeat . . ." Ignoring the taunt, Beeny continued, "In my dream I saw the things which are slowly moving towards our country: the dogs of the sky (horses) that will come across the flatlands and over the mountain passes. Though large as the moose, they are gentle, docile; the horn of their feet is not cloven, but all one. They drag loads after them, and live among the people as our dogs do. I saw the goats of the sky (cattle) living in herds near the villages, whose flesh is used in the place of salmon. I saw strange people walking on earth, people almost like ourselves, whose bodies are covered with tight-fitting clothes, whose faces and hands are white like

those of ghosts, and whose power is as great as that of manitous. I saw . . ."

"Those strange beings are the Kannawdzets," interrupted Gustlee, "the Kannawdzets I have seen at the mountain tops, the dwarfs that cause death whenever they are seen."

Unconcerned, Beeny added, "The white Sky-people I have seen in my dream will soon be coming to our country. The time is at hand when they will make life easy for us. They will show us how to cook in solid pots, without boiling boxes, thongs and red hot stones that burn our hands. Their axes cut the trees in four blows, their long sticks (guns) cast thunderbolts and kill the game a long way off. Their houses, two stories high, are warm in the winter, and the fire always stays invisible within a black box (stove) in the center. They sow in the ground outside seeds that grow into plants, and the plants feed them when the cold moons return. The people, the ghost-like people are coming, I tell you, my friends! And those shall be the good days that change our lives and our ways, the days that Zazeekry is bringing from the eastern sky-land to the land of our forefathers . . ."

"Those ghost-like beings," emphatically declared Gustlee, "are nothing but the Kannawdzets I have

seen up the crags. Beware, my friends! They can do no good, they mean only harm, death. If they come to us, the end is near."

"Not the end, but the beginning!" extolled the seer, his face now radiant with the vision of wonderland. "Our lives shall be a blessing, hard work shall be unnecessary, food shall always be plentiful. When we die, life after death shall also be different. Instead of the Cave-of-the-Dead our home shall be the Sky where the white spirits sing and dance near the gate of sunrise. The sky-beings are not Kannawdzets, they do not kill our people. Our lives shall run the full span of time. When the end comes, we must no longer be suspended from the limbs of trees, but rest in graves, underground. My body shall remain buried for four years after I am dead. My soul shall climb the sky-ladder and travel for four years around the sky, standing one year at each corner. Then I shall return to life again and visit the new generation, the generation of new-born things that are soon to come."

To the utter surprise of all, Beeny now walked past the fire to the door and disappeared outside. The contest between the sorcerer and the seer was over; and still, neither had accomplished any wonder, as in the old days. Gustlee had not shown the Kan-

nawdzets, neither had Beeny the Sky-beings and the objects that were to make existence so easy. Their deeds were only words, talk across the fire in the manner of old women. Truly the new turn seemed so different, so disappointing. Sorcerers were no longer sorcerers! Who could tell now whether their prophecies were true or false?

When the followers of Beeny proceeded out of the house, they were no longer hungry but crestfallen. Gustlee's friends were no less perplexed, humiliated. Neither side could claim the victory. Strange people, new things, were coming to the Mild-people and the Spring-people, every one agreed. But were those newcomers good or bad? Would they bring better lives or only death? No one could tell for certain, and their disagreement has lasted even to the present day, long after the white strangers have come in large numbers and taken possession of the country.

* * *

Had Beeny died within his generation, he might have been spared many disillusions; his fame might have escorted him to his grave; his soul might have scaled the ladder of Heaven with the comforting assurance that his ambitions had not been futile, that his reforms in the perennial home of heathenism would be secure, everlasting. But fate did not so

favour him; his greatest misfortune was to live to a ripe old age. After the inconclusive encounter with his challenger Gustlee, he lost some of his prestige, and his followers were no longer spell-bound by his messianic promulgations. Famine sobered many a staunch dancer in his fraternity, who pondered, "If we do not fish salmon, what is the good of praying to Zazeekry? We die of hunger before we are saved from the big fire."

His disciples for many years conveyed to distant peoples the message of Truth, while he himself had other sky visions and sat in his prayer house as the supreme arbiter of the new faith. But disquieting rumours began to reach his ears. False prophets, self-appointed, appeared in more than one locality. They were emulating his dreams, founding insurgent fraternities and reviving the ancient witchcraft in a new disguise. After a time, almost every tribe had its own Beeny. Not a few of his authentic disciples turned away from him, forsook their allegiance, climbed the sky ladder and had visions on their own account.

No defection hurt his feelings more than that of his foremost standard-bearers, Willeets, Patch-in-the-Sky and First-in-Heaven, nor could he find much consolation in the dismal failure of some of the

renegades. First-in-Heaven was the earliest to come to grief in his pretensions, through the infidelity of his *samalee,* the interpreter of his mystic idiom. After many days of fasting and seclusion, during which their souls were supposed to travel around Heaven, both prophet and disciple returned to earth and recounted their dream to a large gathering. Meanwhile they suffered the pangs of hunger and thirst. It was winter and a time of great scarcity. Suddenly the *samalee* turned to the seer's wife, a great miser whose store of food still mounted high in the *caches.* "My master," he said, "bids you give me dried salmon eggs to eat, for I am starving." There was no choice for her but to serve salmon eggs, even against her own inclination. First-in-Heaven meanwhile lay in a trance on his sky-mat, unable to vent his indignation at the imposture. When his disciple again turned to him, his eyes flashed threateningly and his voice was hoarse. "My chief is angry," explained the interpreter of the mysterious growl; "what he wants is to give a feast to his friends here, a feast of smoked salmon and fish eggs." These words were no sooner spoken than the seer forgot all about his visions, sprang to his feet and chased his *samalee* out of the house, shouting all the way, "Trickster, forked tongue!" The guests were much

disappointed, particularly at losing the long-desired feast of salmon and fish eggs. They filed slowly out of the house never again to be deceived by First-in-Heaven. "There is only one Beeny," they would say; "the others are all fools and liars, like the great Trickster of old."

The worst of Beeny's disappointments, however, were those of his old age, when fate decreed that he should witness the fulfilment of his own predictions. The "Sky-beings" were first seen near the big lakes to the east, and the news spread in the twinkling of an eye. "So Beeny has said, so it has come to pass," declared the people, without showing their surprise. The age of easy living was dawning at last. There was a stirring upheaval among the Mild-people and the Spring-people, as if for the advent of a redeemer, the long-promised redeemer of their laborious existence.

The newcomers, indeed, had a white skin; their beards were as long as those of sorcerers, and their garments fitted their limbs as tightly as the bark covers a tree. They owned the "dogs of the sky" (horses), sharp knives that opened things as if by magic, axes that brought down the trees in a few blows, long sticks emitting thunder and lightning (guns), and many other wonderful objects besides.

Yet they were no manitous, no ghosts; they boasted of no supernatural gifts. They were hungry and tired, in need of food and rest. And plainly enough, they were born, they lived and died just like themselves, the red men of the uplands. They were not truly "sky beings," but merely white men, from another part of the world.

The strangers wanted to trade, that was the only thing they cared for. Only to those who had furs to offer would they give their belongings in exchange. Here Beeny was shocked beyond words, heartbroken for the rest of his days, for he was a poor man, a dreamer whose concern had always been the sky ladder and the teachings of Zazeekry. He had no pelts for trading, no pelts and no means of accumulating wealth. So the first gun, the first axe, the first knife ever obtained in his country did not pass into his hands, but into those of his rivals, his enemies, who had always mocked at his "lies" and resorted to their hunting grounds. Beeny remained empty-handed, forsaken in the background even by his own friends. Now that his forebodings had proved true, and he had nothing more to foretell, all interest in him vanished forever.

Not many moons after, a Black-robe (missionary), following in the footsteps of the traders, propounded

the doctrine of Zazeekry and wanted to baptize the natives. The Mild-people said, "This white man is another Beeny, but he has no horn bowl." So they would not believe in him at first. "We need repent no more," they replied to him, "for we repented long ago. We need no new baptism, for we were baptized by our own seer Beeny after he returned from the sky." "Who is that Beeny?" the Black-robe enquired, and they told him all about the seer's death and resurrection. "A juggler, an imposter," he declared; "a servant of the Evil Spirit!"

A great temptation now beset Beeny's mind. His only surviving son was ill and likely to die before the new moon; and the people would tell him, "Once, you cured all diseases with your bird-like rattle. You were a powerful sorcerer. Will you not save your son's life?" He had prayed Zazeekry and used his white cloth to no avail. So he took up his Indian rattle, the rattle of all medicine-men, the noisy rattle of heathenish rites; he put on his robe of white mountain goat skin, and sang his ancient incantation over his son, "O you, Kahoona, the Big-horn of the mountains, my Manitou! Listen to me, thy unfaithful child; I am weeping to myself, all to myself. I am suffering; I mourn. When, oh when is my *snam* Big-horn to return to me, Big-horn that sees the sick-

ness, Big-horn that is able to cure my son, my only son!"

Before the day was over Beeny lay on his mat. "I have broken the rule," he said, "the rule of the sky. I have done wrong. I must do penance." He summoned his friends and relatives to his side and said to them, "Now I am going to die. After my death, bury my body in the ground, but not very deep, for I shall come back to life after four years; four years is my time, one year at each corner of Heaven."

The people began to weep, for they knew him to be near death. "Put a bowl of water at my side," he prayed, "a bowl of water so that I may see." When the bowl was placed near him he looked into the water and it vanished like a white mist in the sun. So did his soul depart, all at once. He died after sunset, Beeny, the seer of the Mild-people, whose mind travelled all over the world.

An Indian rattle was placed on his breast, and his corpse rested on his prayer board. He was buried with his feet to the east and his head to the west.

At night, streaks of light in the form of white spirits singing and dancing could be seen in the darkness over his grave, their arms crossed over their bosoms. "These are the white spirits of the sky." whispered the people," the spirits he has seen near the gate of sunrise, in Heaven."

Now there arose a disagreement among the Mild-people as to whether the seer's body should be left at Trout-Lake, the place of his death. Some of the old men argued, "This is the spot where he has seen the sky ladder, where he can climb to the sky." But the great majority said, "Trout-Lake is only a hunting-ground, not the starting point of human souls on their long journey." So the remains were dug up in the presence of all, and carried to the village, at the river canyon.

The mourners were afraid lest Beeny's soul should have been disturbed, for his body had turned face downwards and the rattle had fallen from his hands. To prevent him from returning to life before the end of his four years, they dug his grave very deep, in the manner of the white man.

The four years passed, and Beeny did not rise from among the dead. His friends vainly awaited his return. Many score years, indeed, have since gone by. All those who have lived in his time are gone, and soon his memory will have vanished without leaving a trace. "If he did not come back," some of the Mild-people still say, "it was due to his rattle, the sin of his life." Others believe that it is the fault of his friends who, forsaking his last desire, buried him too deep underground. Yet there are not a few natives

still remaining who believe in Beeny's ultimate resurrection for the welfare of his people, the unhappy Mild-people who are now chafing under the new law, the law of the white man which is slowly driving them out of existence.

II. Forerunners of a New Age

II. Forerunners of a New Age

THE Indian seers and prophets had long predicted the coming of strange sky beings from the east, of men white like ghosts and powerful like manitous. Their visions of the future had been prompted by repeated warnings, as rumours always travelled fast in the wide expanses of virgin America. The native tribes therefore anticipated uncanny visitations. They could not be taken wholly by surprise, for "nothing ever happens," according to their own saying, "but what has already been foretold."

At the time when the world circumnavigators first explored the north-west coast, about the end of the eighteenth century, when the de La Vérendryes, in 1843, approached the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and Alexander MacKenzie (1793), David Thompson, Simon Fraser, Gabriel Franchère and other pathfinders, first explored the mountain passes, there must have been rather few Indians even in remote recesses who had not already heard of the white man, if only through the fantastic distortions of native forebodings. From one to two centuries had

elapsed since the Europeans had established their first settlements on the Atlantic coast, and the news could not fail in time to spread westwards.

Even before the advent of navigators on the west coast and official pathfinders across the continent, many odd forerunners of a new age seem to have aroused the prairie and mountain dwellers out of their drowsy uneventful existence. Scourges hitherto unknown—cholera and smallpox—visited their land more than once, sorely reducing their numbers. As if to confirm the prophecy, herds of "sky-dogs" ("cayuses" or Spanish-Mexican horses run wild) invaded the plains from the south. The Blackfeet, the Stonies and the Crees on the Canadian prairies were among the first to capture and ride them. The Rocky Mountain tribes used to come down the passes and hunt buffalo at the foothills, the Kootenays going as far as the headwaters of the Missouri. There they beheld the unfamiliar "cayuses" for the first time and managed to tame and bring back a few to their own valleys.

From the west coast came the tale of the ***Tlehonnipts,*** "Those-who-drift-ashore," not in whales as at first believed, but in large wooden monsters (ships) covered with white wings (sails) and bright shells (copper). "Those-who-drift-ashore" had the magical

JOE NANA
RUNNING CALF OR KAN-A-HUN-KAN-GOYA-KATHLAM
KOOTENAY INDIAN

power of hammering pieces of black rock (iron) into sharp knives and hatchets. Konapee and his companion who were thus forced ashore are likely to have been Asiatics whose junk was wrecked at the mouth of the Columbia River, for they possessed metals and also what seem to have been Chinese coins. Other tales of marvellous wrecks also pushed their way up the valleys into the interior and are preserved in the local lore right to the present day; for instance the "Beeswax ship," which seems to have been a Spanish vessel loaded with beeswax, probably for the use of the Lower Californian missions, that drifted far north and became a total loss. The white sailors who escaped drowning soon infringed upon the family rights of their native hosts, thereby inviting extermination. The few survivors took Indian women to wives, and their progeny is said to have been noted for fair complexions.

It is not surprising therefore to find in the accounts of the official discoverers—Cook, Dixon, La Pérouse, Meares, Thompson, Franchère . . .—that sundry traces of earlier contact between the natives and the white men were in evidence. Whenever the visitors were sighted, whole bands would come forth well prepared for the accustomed ceremony of welcome and the barter of furs and commodities.

Cook, supposedly the first to anchor in Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island in 1778, saw two silver spoons hanging as ornaments from the neck of a chief of the Nootkas. Not many years later an old blind man whose name was Soto, lived in his fishing lodge near the Cascades of the Columbia River. When visited by Franchère, in 1811, he showed great courtesy and claimed to be a white man himself, the son of a Spaniard who had survived with many others after a wreck on the sea coast. From this it is clear that the Spanish refugees must have been seen in the Columbia River valley some time in the first part of the eighteenth century, that is more than fifty years before Cook "discovered" the coast, and almost a century before Thompson travelled over the passes of the Saskatchewan.

At least a few decades before the appearance of any missionary, the natives already possessed certain notions of Christian rituals, possibly through seers like Beeny. Franchère relates that, in 1811, David Stuart, of the Astoria Fur Company, was greeted near the rapids of the Columbia River by a party of Indians, one of whom blessed the people by sprinkling water over their heads and acted much in the manner of a Catholic missionary. The rapids for that reason have been known ever since under

the name of "Rapides du prêtre" (the Priest's Rapids).

If awe and reverence were apt to keep the natives on their guard whenever they espied the earliest white men in their country, it was because of superstitious fears. Their own seers' descriptions of ghost-like beings from the sky had not been forgotten. But their illusions were short-lived. The newcomers' lack of supernatural attributes could not escape their keen sense of observation, and they soon found out that, unlike ghosts and manitous, their strange visitors were nothing but men after all, endowed with marvellous gifts it is true, but as liable as themselves to starve, fall sick and die. Awe then gave way to curiosity, that Indian-like curiosity and furtiveness which at times seemed ludicrous.

Some Willamettes of the Columbia River, for instance, could not help showing their surprise when they met the McKay party of the Astoria company, in 1811; and Franchère relates how they examined their visitors, opening their shirts, lifting their trousers, and comparing the skin of their hands and faces with that of their body until their curiosity was satisfied. Ross Cox, three years later, had a similar experience with some "Chaudière" natives, near the waterfalls of the same river. They had never seen white men,

he relates with humour, and their astonishment was extreme at the great contrast between the tall raw-boned figure and flowing red hair of my friend—Mr. McDonald—and my own cropped head, John-Bullish face, low and somewhat corpulent figure. An old woman wanted to see my arms uncovered, and when she was satisfied, begged to see my breast. I accordingly opened my shirt and she seemed no longer to entertain any doubts as to the skin of my body being all white. Now the supernatural colour of Mr. McDonald's hair attracted her curiosity, and she wished to know more of it. The red-haired Scotchman complied and sat down. She commenced an inquisitorial search, in the usual manner, after certain *animalculi* which shall remain nameless. Her disappointment was great when she could not find a solitary "ferlie", the absence of which she ascribed to the extraordinary colour of the hair. The sight of the "swarthy bodies decorated with buff belts" of a score of Sandwich islanders accompanying the Astor party also seemed to attract the attention of the Indians, who repeatedly pointed towards them, speaking to each other with considerable animation.

Years after the trading companies had established their forts all over the country, not a few backwood natives were still apt to show their astonishment at

the white men and their peculiar ways. Paul Kane quotes the instance of Colin Frazer, Sir George Simpson's piper, who was an object of intense curiosity to the Athabaska River tribes even as late as 1841, on account of his Highland costume and pipes. "When stopping at the forts, the bagpipes were put in requisition, much to the surprise of the natives." As they had never beheld such an extraordinary looking man and a musical instrument with such unearthly sound, they seemed to have "supposed the piper to be a relative of the Great Spirit," and one of them even asked him to intercede on his behalf with the powers above.

In time the inhabitants of the plains and the mountains so far revised their estimate of the newcomers as to consider them mischievous, undignified and foolish, not always without reason. But they could not forget the bewildering superiority of European crafts over their own. Native contrivances, made simple for lack of metals and pottery, were doomed from the first, for the tomahawk, the bows and arrows could never compete with steel knives, axes and flint-lock guns. The animal skins which they used for dress could not compare in their eyes with the brilliant new garments of the trading counters, and their water-tight bags and baskets had

to be discarded for brass or iron kettles. Their first glimpses of the white man's weapons and tools left so deep an impression in their minds that their descendants after many generations still have preserved vivid recollections of the event. When we ask any well-informed old-timer in the Rocky Mountains, "Tell me all about the first gun, the first steel axe, the first kettle that were ever seen in your country," almost invariably he can tell long stories about them. The tale of Big-Raven, a hunter of the northern plateaus, will serve as an illustration.

"The rumour for a long, long time, was that things would soon be different, that the world would be made easy to live in. Chief Maloolek (Walking-Skeleton) became very excited when he heard that the change was about to come. He gave up work, he would hunt no more. His nephews left him sitting at the back of the house, waiting for the change to come, while they themselves resorted as usual to the far distant hunting grounds in the mountain passes to the east. The hunters knew that the chief was lazy, so they only laughed at him.

"While most of the people were away, some Indians of a neighbouring tribe came over; they came to Maloolek's village; not only that, but to his own house. He was still there waiting for the things

that would make life and the world easy. For five years he had thus sat without working, without hunting. As he spied the strangers he put on his dancing-robe; he sang and danced to welcome them. He knew that the moment had come at last, and his heart was glad. While singing his song, "Who am I to fight with?" he waved his stone axe in the air and threw it away on the dump heap.

"The strangers had an iron axe to trade. This was the purpose of their visit. But the axe was so precious that they would not unwrap it yet. Maloolek therefore invited them and the few people left in the village to a feast. The guests were to witness the ceremony of unwrapping what was to make life easy ever after. When finally the axe was unwrapped the people looked at it as if it had been a manitou; they looked at it for a long while. Then one of the Indian strangers invited Maloolek and the other people to follow him outside, to learn the magic power of the axe.

"The holder of the axe selected a small poplar to his own liking and asked the people to stand around at some distance; but he was not yet ready for the ceremony. The old men, the old women and the cripples leaning on their sticks had plenty of time to gather around the ring. Word then passed around,

'He will hit it five times and it shall fall.' Those who had faith in the tool echoed, 'Yes, it shall fall.' But this seemed incredible, as the people always had to chop a tree all around like beavers, for ever so long, with their blunt stone axes. The incredulous ones insisted, 'No, he will have to hit it ten times, twenty times, and then, maybe, it shall not fall.' They stood there looking and discussing, almost coming to blows amongst themselves, until the holder of the axe became nervous for fear of bloodshed. He grew wildly excited, lifted the axe and brought it down upon the poplar. Four times only, twice on each side, he hit the tree, and it fell down upon some women before they had time to move. Shouts of joy greeted the event. Maloolek now traded for the axe, and the strangers left with huge packs of moose hides and other furs.

"Now then, there were only two trails leading in and out of the village, one named 'the-Moving-Trail,' and the other, 'the-Travelling-Trail.' Both were used by the hunters. Maloolek started out with his new iron axe, all by himself, and he chopped trees down, chopped trees down all along the trail just in sight of the village on both sides. The chips he gathered in heaps, in the middle of the footpath, and the ends of the trees he dragged across the trail.

"When the first hunters arrived on the spot they were thunderstruck, they 'fell dead' with surprise. 'Look at it all!' they exclaimed; 'what was to make life and the world easy has come in our absence.' They stayed there gazing at the chips and the trees, they could not move, they could not leave those chips and those trees. They camped right there, awaiting for the other hunters to return, also to be thunderstruck in their turn.

"The next day the hunters moved in a body into the village. It was Maloolek's turn to laugh at them, and the people thought it was a great joke. They asked, 'What were you doing along the trail last night? What kind of men were you not to be able to end the journey when you were just in sight of your very houses?' "

Traditional accounts as to the first white men ever seen in the land have also survived in many parts; some of these are now given with glimpses of humour by the present day narrators, who seem to imply, "Our ancestors knew only little; they were like children compared with ourselves." To follow an Indian narrative again, here is how the first appearance of two white hunters—possibly French *coureurs-des-bois* or half-breeds—has been remembered at Hiding-in-mountain village, to the north of the Big Bend of the Columbia River.

"This took place long ago, in the mountains. Two hunters of our own tribe were travelling along the trails, in the passes. The name of one was Rain-drop, and of the other, Cloven-hoofed. As they were preparing to ford a deep creek, two men unlike anybody else approached them. 'These are People from the Sky,' they thought to themselves. But they could not move away; their legs were as if stiffened by the cold. Rain-drop said, 'I will kill them.' Cloven-hoofed retorted, 'Beware! it means disaster for us!' They only had hafted stone axes in their hand. When they saw that the ghost-like strangers were not afraid but drew nearer, they thought, 'We cannot do anything, we cannot help ourselves.'

"One of the two men—who were white like peeled logs—then took a shining cup and a crystal-like bottle from his pockets and poured off a drink. Rain-drop was too frightened to drink from the cup. So was Cloven-hoofed. The white man then swallowed some of the contents himself. 'If he can drink it,' thought Cloven-hoofed, 'it may not be hurtful.' Rain-drop's idea now was, 'If we drink it we may become as white as they are. We may get the power of spirits.' Now they were both willing. Rain-drop took the cup first. Then it was his friend's turn. They found it good, very good, much better than

anything they had ever known. After one cupful, another. They felt most happy. 'We will now be turned into white beings from the sky.' The change seemed so wonderful that they clamoured for more drink. But they sat down to rest, and fell into a stupor. When they knew no more the white men departed.

"They must have stayed there a long while, a day or more. Their limbs were stiff and cold and their stomachs sick when they came to. Rain-drop was the first to stand up. What he did was to look at one of his hands. It was not white, but about the same shade as before. The other hand was not much different. He had not had enough to drink; that was the whole matter. The change had only begun. Cloven-hoofed was quite sick when he came to. He fell to sleep again, and when he awoke, his friend was gone. 'It is all very strange,' he said; 'Rain-drop is surely gone to the sky, and I am left alone here. I did not get enough to drink; that is the whole trouble.' He was much disappointed to find the shade of his skin unchanged. After crawling a short distance he found his friend asleep on the trail. 'He stopped only half-way,' he thought; 'not enough drink!' And he also lay down to sleep again.

"Before a few days had passed, they felt much dis-

appointed. The new change had left nothing but pain to them. When they reached home and told their experience, some old men laughed and said, 'You speak like fools. These truly were not ghosts, but only white men.' "

The invaders did not fail at times to turn the native credulity to their own advantage. Mr. McDougall, of the Astor company, had good reasons indeed to use every means to protect his men against the hostile and thievish bands resorting to the Dalles of the Columbia. He knew with what superstitious dread they remembered the smallpox epidemics of the past. The most harrowing features of their ravages were not yet forgotten. In the height of fever the sick used to plunge into the cold water of the river or roll in the snow; but this treatment brought instant death. Others committed suicide out of fright. Whole villages went out of existence; in others only a few scattered survivors were left. "The great Master of Life," so they believed, "had delivered them over to the Evil Spirit in punishment for their wickedness." In the midst of a gathering of several chiefs at the Dalles, Mr. McDougall showed a small bottle containing a dark liquid and said, "My party here is small in numbers but strong in medicine. You must advise your people not to molest us, else I

shall uncork this bottle, which contains the spirit of smallpox, and you will all die out." The chief's protest was vehement and immediate. No, he should not uncork the bottle! Their own people had always been friendly to all visitors and would always remain so. The thieves belonged to an inland band that had no furs to trade, and therefore resorted to robbery to secure the much desired goods. If the bottle were uncorked the evil would run wild for the ruin of good and bad Indians alike; and it was unjust to punish friends for the crimes of enemies. This argument in the circumstances could not fail to convince the shrewd trader, who nevertheless thought it advisable to conclude that if any white people were attacked in the future he would at once uncork the bottle and empty it of its black potion. From that day (in 1814) Mr. McDougall was greatly dreaded by the natives, who firmly believed that he held their lives in his hands. The honorific name by which he was known ever after was "the Great-Smallpox-Chief."

The Cœur d'Alènes tribe was not so far removed from the Dalles Indians as not to be impressed by the rumours of the deadly threat of the white traders. More than thirty years later, in 1847, they related to Father De Smet that the first white man seen in their country wore a white coverlet and a smallpox shirt—

that is, a calico shirt spotted all over with black and white. To them the shirt was no other than the manitou of Smallpox himself and the white coverlet that of Snow. The only safe course for them to adopt was to purchase the shirt and coverlet manitous in order to propitiate and pay high honours to them. So they induced the white stranger to part with his valuables in return for several of their best horses. These manitous for many years remained the objects of profound veneration. On great solemnities they were carried in procession to a high eminence and spread on the grass in the sight of all the Indians. The medicine-pipe was smoked in their honour just as if they had been the Sun, the Moon or the Sky. Sorcerers sang incantations to them and the dancers joined in a prolonged tribal celebration.

Soon after the fur trading companies and the Oregon immigrants had introduced their wares in large quantities, in the forties, a marked change came over the appearance of the Columbia River tribes. Whereas a few years before, men, women and children did not mind going almost naked when they camped near the trading posts, now they paraded in dresses and costumes of grotesque inappropriateness. As Father De Smet puts it, the Dalles were then "a kind of masquerading thoroughfare" where immi-

LOUIS ARBELLE
GRIZZLY OR KAN-E-KLOW-KLA
CHIEF OF KOOTENAY INDIANS

grants and Indians met, the ones in search of provisions, horses and canoes, the others receiving in exchange old travelling clothes—trousers, coats, caps and boots of every size and description—now discarded by immigrant settlers and adventurers of Spanish, French, British and German extraction.

As a result of this promiscuous barter, most of the Indians could boast of valued prizes nowhere displayed more proudly than in the presence of the white people they chanced to meet. Some would wear the full dress of wagoners; others, a mixture of women's, wagoners', sailors' and lawyers' garments, all to suit their fancies. Women attended to their domestic pursuits arrayed in flowing calico gowns, buttonless vests and flannel coats usually besmeared with fish oil and other fatty substances.

The bartering for furs and commodities was a lengthy and ceremonial procedure. The procrastination of the natives before engaging in business was proverbial. Traders and customers had first to sit through the whole performance of smoking the calumet, speech-making, singing and dancing till everyone was hoarse and exhausted.

According to Ross Cox's description, when the hunters arrived at a fort they dumped their packages of furs in a heap on the ground and sat round it in a

circle. The chief trader then lit the calumet of peace, and solemnly blew a whiff of smoke towards each cardinal point. Other puffs followed in quick succession. The calumet was then passed to the visiting chief, who repeated the ceremony, and from his hands it went all around the circle, from mouth to mouth, until everyone had given a few whiffs and the pipe was empty.

The interminable speeches made by the chiefs in loud singing voices were punctuated at almost every sentence by acknowledgments of *hoy, hoy!* from the hunters sitting around the circle. One such was heard by Sir George Simpson at Fort Colville, where the Kootenays, the Spokans and the Pend d'Oreilles used to have dealings. A very old chief of the Chaudières tribe, whose only attire consisted of a buffalo hide, made a speech of nearly half an hour before disposing of his furs, and he was sent away "as happy as a king, with a carpet, a shirt, a knife, and a small stock of ammunition and tobacco." The other chiefs, finding that long speeches paid so well, came forward in their turn "to have their talk out, taking care, of course, to continue the palaver till the equivalents were forthcoming."

The Indians as a whole, the Stonies and Blackfeet in particular, did not take long to master the tricks of

the trade. They fast developed into shrewd, hard dealers, "not a whit inferior," to use Ross Cox's words, "to any native of Yorkshire, Scotland, or Connaught, in driving a bargain." An extreme specimen of their ingenuity is quoted by Sir George Simpson, who bought a fine mare and a two year old colt from the elderly female chief of the Kootenays. The explorer gave in exchange a lean and tired horse, twenty rounds of ammunition, a blanket and a fathom of tobacco. The woman was quite satisfied; but when the party of explorers was about to leave she seemed to have made up her mind that her favourite mare could have commanded a better price. So she tried to jockey Sir George into paying for what had been overlooked—the foal which the mare was to bring forth the following spring.

Conservative and unprogressive as the northwestern tribes as a whole may seem to us at the present day, it is nonetheless true that they have failed to safeguard the most fundamental features of their traditional culture. Hardly any of their manual arts and contrivances have resisted the impact of trade wares and goods, even though some of them were truly fit to survive for the benefit of the community at large. The profuse and inspiring riches of their mythology have unnecessarily fallen into discredit,

to be replaced by inept distortions of Christianity or a mere vacuous scepticism. The premature disappearance of many ancient customs that lay at the root of native ethics has brought the whole social fabric to the brink of the abyss. Self-confidence is gone beyond redemption; pride and ambition ruined; and hope in the future is slight, if not futile.

Before the white man was first encountered, he was looked for as a demi-god. His coming was greeted as a great blessing. The golden age seemed to be dawning. The heirlooms of the past were cast aside; their discredit was absolute, final. But the day of awakening was not long in coming. The white invaders were not "Sky-beings," they were not the benefactors of any but themselves. The possession of their goods, their riches, was not enough in itself to make life more happy. Prosperity as a result did not fall to the lot of the red men, the first occupants of the land; for, after more than a century of faithful service to the fur-trading companies, they have not managed to secure themselves against the growing prospect of a rainy day. Nor was their improvidence wholly to blame, for no European, however thrifty, could have stored away the perishable and scanty proceeds of the trade in the trying circumstances of nomadic life.

III. On the War Path

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WARS from time immemorial have swept over Europe like vast tidal waves. Pagan and Christian blood has flowed in endless streams, and misery has often held down nations like a yoke of lead. But the worst trials have not sufficed to curb lust of rule and racial pride. The desire for conquest and self-aggrandizement was too powerful ever to be checked by defeat. The fatal contest was again renewed with unabated fury at every few generations. War, it seems, drifted with the wind across shifting frontiers, and its infectious fumes spread to every nation like a pestilence.

Neither were the American tribes, in pre-Columbian times, wholly free of taint in this respect. Invasions of territorial rights are known to have resulted in clashes. But the native feuds would not compare with the battles of large armies overseas. The scalp hunters stalked forth in mere handfuls and only under the cover of night. Their weapons—bows and arrows and the tomahawk—never reaped a large harvest. Open encounters were shunned as

wasteful folly. The careful balance between offence and revenge was so maintained as to keep the measure from overflowing. Peace and justice as a whole prevailed to a far greater degree among the untutored red men than among the more civilized Europeans. The golden age of untrammelled existence, while it lasted, was gradually leading up to the higher stages of culture.

It was with the coming of the white man that the curse of war really invaded these shores. The French and the British could not forget their long-standing differences. Soon after settling on the Atlantic coast they sought allies among the tribes within reach of their strongholds and their feuds spread like wildfire first to the forests, then across the prairies to the west. As a result the Iroquois and the Hurons engaged in deadly skirmishes around the great lakes. Firearms meant victory for the nation that secured possession of them, and extermination for its less fortunate rivals. The Iroquois won the race and, as early as 1650, had practically wiped out the Hurons, a nation of thirty thousand souls, or twice their own numbers.

The competitive fur-trading companies continued to enlist Indians in support of their interests, and furnished firearms to their allies, as they slowly

JAKE SWAMPY
SQUIRREL OR SIJA
SWAMPY-CREE INDIAN

penetrated into the interior of the continent. The Crees and other eastern tribes thus began their drive from the Hudson Bay into the prairies. The weaker nations had to yield, but under stress they encroached upon hunting-grounds that belonged to other occupants. Feuds resulted between the Crees, the Stonies, the Sarcees and the Blackfeet, that were to spell the ruin of the prairie dwellers. Similar conflicts were all the while spreading beyond the headwaters of the Missouri. The Sioux, the Flatheads, the Kootenays and their neighbours incessantly wrangled for archaic privileges, as they drew nearer the foothills or even sought shelter in the mountain ranges.

Frontiers were not an idle question for the contenders. They meant safety within their borders where the hunters could scatter at random according to the needs of the chase. In the pursuits of nomadic life the welfare of all hinged upon the success of the hunt.

Game and fish were plentiful in the early days and there was little danger of starvation. The buffalo roamed the plains in immense herds. On its flesh the natives depended for their favourite food, and from its skin they made garments, bags and tents. The main occupation of the Stonies was the prepara-

tion of pemmican, that is, buffalo meat preserved in grease and wrapped in skin for future use. The Blackfeet hardly knew of any other food. Fish they regarded as unclean, and they loathed foreigners for liking it. The buffalo was a gift of Providence to them. They loved the buffalo hunt for its thrills and its bounties. Upon its success rested their comfort and simple pleasures. They sat down, after the slaughter, to a feast that atoned for lean days, and the saying went, "He who eats when he is hungry is well fed and happy. But he who does not eat when he has plenty of meat is a fool, for a long while may pass before he may eat again."

The buffalo presently became the source of all their misfortunes. Parties of hunters from various tribes would clash over conflicting claims. No redress could be found but in violence. The security of frontiers once abolished, might proved the only protection, numbers and cunning the only pledge of victory. In the earlier encounters the Crees, and then the Blackfeet, had the upper hand. They had secured the coveted firearms from the traders. The Blackfeet were the Bedouins of the prairies. Their numbers and boldness gave them the ascendancy over other nations, and they never relented in the defence of their vast domains, which extended from the

Red River to the Rocky Mountains and from the sources of the Missouri to the Saskatchewan. Their war and hunting parties were the terror of the land. In their innumerable encounters with the scattered parties of Cree, Stony and Kootenay poachers, they were generally victorious. And bitterness sank deep everywhere. The toll of lives grew heavier as time went by. The confused threads of murder and revenge could no longer be unravelled.

Neither were the territorial claims of the Blackfeet beyond dispute. Were they not themselves intruders from the east, long ago? The Kootenays and the Flatheads, among others, claimed that the privilege of hunting the buffalo had come down to them from their forefathers. Though they now lived across the mountains, they had always largely depended upon it for subsistence. From childhood they had migrated twice a year in family groups down the mountain passes for the same pursuit.

The mountain tribes as a last resort might have renounced their pretensions, for they were fighting a losing battle, with only bows and arrows to oppose to the guns of the marauders of the plains. Game could be found on their own mountain slopes—deer, mountain sheep and goat, bear, wild-fowl and fish. But even the tragedy of their dwindling numbers

failed to curb their hereditary bias. The buffalo was at stake, and if anyone hinted at withdrawal from the bad lands, they stubbornly replied that while a single one of their warriors remained alive they should do as their forefathers had done. No right should be relinquished.

Firearms were the cause of all their misfortunes, since only the Blackfeet could procure them from the North-West Company at Fort-des-Prairies, east of the mountains. The Kootenays and their allies, the Flatheads, the Cœur-d'Alènes and the Shuswaps, entertained the most violent hatred against the white men for their harmful if unintentional favouritism. But when they first met the fur traders in their own valleys they welcomed them from purely selfish motives. Beaver skins were the chief inducement for the visits of the strangers, for the foundation of trading establishments, as the Indians knew full well; and the beaver abounded on their hunting grounds. So they obtained firearms to meet their old enemies on more equal terms. Indeed they were overjoyed at their new opportunity, which meant salvation to them. They stocked themselves up with arms and ammunition and were not long in finding their chance for bloody reprisals against the Blackfeet. From that day, their encounters on the plains took a different turn.

A Salish chief thus vented his feelings in the presence of David Thompson, the explorer, who attended the peace pourparlers between the Piegans—a branch of the Blackfeet—and the mountain tribes in the autumn of 1812: "We have now twenty tents of women who have no husbands, with their children, whose fathers are in the Land of Spirits, and as many tents of aged women whose sons have fallen in battle." We "have all noticed the arrival of the white man among us for these three years bringing us guns, ammunition and shods of iron for the heads of our arrows. Before their arrival we were pitiful and could not defend ourselves. But we are now as well armed as our enemies, and our last battle has obliged them to give up to us great parts of our lands for hunting the bison. Now we do not fear to war with them".

Taken by surprise and defeated, the Blackfeet became enraged at the traders for their alleged duplicity. They proceeded to Fort-des-Prairies and declared that all the white men who ventured beyond the mountains would henceforth be treated by them as enemies. No trading in firearms with their rivals would be tolerated. And their threat was put into execution.

The North-West Company's trading post on the

Kootenay Plains, near the headwaters of the Saskatchewan River, had thus to be abandoned, in the spring of 1807, for fear of destruction. Thompson crossed the mountains by the defiles of the Saskatchewan River, and built three log houses with stockades and bastions on the Columbia River, near the point where the river leaves its source at Lake Windermere. But he soon received a perplexing visit from two Piegans who had come on foot to prepare the ground for hostilities. After showing them that the solid walls of logs were strong and bullet-proof, Thompson warned the spies, saying, "I know you have come for an evil purpose. You intend to destroy us, but many of you will die before you do so. Go back to your country and tell your people the truth."

After the spies had returned home with their message the Piegans assembled in council and determined to despatch forty warriors to attack the new outpost. The raiders camped in front of the bastions, close to the gate, so as to overawe the traders, six lone white men within, and compel them to surrender without a shot. There they remained stationed without venturing to attack, for their chief, Kootanae Appee, had received instructions not to lose a single warrior. They never found their chance,

as the white traders were on the watch behind ten well-loaded guns in large "augur" holes. What is more, they were much disturbed at being discovered by some Kootenay hunters, as they knew that their presence on foreign territory would be construed as a grave transgression and invite reprisals.

The party suddenly departed after a siege of three weeks, and its cheerless report aroused the Piegans to decisive measures. The Kootenays and the white men were to be crushed while it was still easy. The war chiefs, agreeing that this would soon be made impossible by the introduction of firearms among their enemies, declared, "The Kootenays have always been our prisoners and now they would pretend to equal us. No, we must not suffer it. They shall all perish, for we know them to be desperate men." An old chief coolly observed, "We are now called upon to go to war against a people better armed than ourselves." But this untimely remark brought only rebuke upon him from the intelligent men, who said, "The older he gets the less sense he possesses."

A party of three hundred warriors under three chiefs had soon gathered. Kootanae Appee exhorted them in a final speech. Each man he advised to take ten full days of dried provisions, "for we shall soon leave the country of the bison. After this we must not fire a shot, or else we might be discovered."

The Piegans proceeded by the defiles of the Stag River across the mountains and struck the Columbia River some distance from the trading post. A visit from two of their spies was a good warning to Thompson, who suspected the approach of a large force. It was fortunate that some Kootenays arrived at that very moment, their eyes glaring like tigers' at the Piegans. To avert disaster Thompson resorted to cunning and diplomacy. He invited the spies to sit down and smoke, and brought presents to them: six feet of tobacco for Kootanae Appee, their chief, and a fine pipe of red pipestone with a decorated stem; eighteen inches of tobacco to each of the three chiefs, and a piece for all the others. Then he solemnly declared, "You have no right to be in this country. You must hurry away for I will not be able to protect you. The Kootenays will soon be here to fight for their own trading post."

After a day's journey northwards the spies met their party and delivered the presents. "What can we do with that man?" exclaimed a war chief, "he knows all about the stars; he can see everything, and our women cannot mend a pair of moccasins but he knows it." He laid down the pipe and the tobacco on the ground, adding, "We cannot accept these if we decide for war." A great temptation had come

to them, as they had no tobacco. They looked at the prize wistfully.

The eldest of the war leaders then made up his mind. "You all know me, who I am and what I am," he said. "I have attacked tents all my life. My knife cuts through them. Our enemies cannot resist. This I shall do as long as I live. But now I am face to face with logs that balls from our guns cannot pierce. And the white men behind these logs are not even at war with us. I shall go no farther." Upon these words he cut some tobacco, filled the red pipe and handed it to Kootanae Appee, the head-chief, adding, "It is not you who has brought us here, but the foolish civil chief who himself never goes to war."

They all smoked together and their feelings were much relieved. Peace was now the only outcome for them. So the next day they retraced their steps and climbed back into the mountain passes.

Though they refrained from further incursions across the mountains at that time, the Piegans did not easily forget their grudge. When Thompson was proceeding up the Saskatchewan with goods for the need of the trade along the Columbia, in the autumn of 1810, he was stopped by Black-Bear, a Piegan chief, and forced to turn back. He resumed his venture by subterfuge at night, in spite of dire risks.

Some of his canoes, much to his dismay, failed to make an appearance the next day. Danger seemed imminent. An old hunter rose very early in the morning, looked at the fresh venison hanging from poles outside, and said, "This meat will never be eaten. I have had a bad dream." Two scouts started back to look for the stragglers. They found the spot where the canoes had last landed and noticed blood on a low rampart of stones erected for self-defence. To warn the canoe men of their presence they fired a shot, in spite of the dictates of prudence, for the Piegans' camp stood only a short distance beyond.

Thompson at once aroused his party to utmost exertion, in a hurried flight for life up the river. But the odds seemed against him. Fallen trees blocked the trail at every turn, and the tracks of the horses made it easy for the pursuers on foot gradually to gain ground. A fall of snow early in the afternoon made the chase more difficult. Then the sight of three grizzly bears smelling the tracks of the horses in front of them took the warriors by surprise. Nothing but the white man's witchcraft could have induced these spirit-like bears to stand there for their protection. So the chase had better be given up. There was nothing else to do against such a resourceful foe. This belief was a mercy to the fugitives, who

rode through the woods until dark and then, at night, awaited their fate with anxiety. When they could find no enemy in sight, the next morning, they were at a loss what to do—take to the defiles in the mountains or return to search for the straggling party left behind. Two days afterwards both men and canoes were found at the lately deserted trading post, forty miles below. And it was determined hereafter to adopt a safer route to the Columbia River, that of the Athabaska River passes farther to the north.

Other Piegan war parties later went out to intercept Thompson's progress, but to no avail; they could not trail him. Out of spite, they destroyed Salish House, one of his new trading posts, attacked some of his Iroquois hunters and slaughtered a whole family of Kootenays whom they found in the neighbourhood.

The Piegans soon perceived that the advantage would not forever be on their side, for their enemies were growing bolder and more successful whenever they appeared on the plains for the buffalo hunt. Being the westernmost relatives of the Blackfeet, they stood the brunt of the war and, worse still, had much to complain of in other ways; their own allies would often steal their horses on pretense of making raids beyond the foothills. So they decided to sue for peace.

Five of their emissaries, old dignified men, met the Columbia River tribes in solemn council. The Salish, the Kootenays and their neighbours longed for peace, but could not repose any confidence in their wily enemies, who had deceived them too often before. An old Spokane chief threw his robe aside and showed the scars that marked his breast. "So our enemies are proposing peace," he said with bitterness; "how often have they done so before! Whenever we trusted their words we scattered into small parties for hunting the bison. But we were attacked and our women and children destroyed. Who among us has not many times cut off his hair to mourn over relatives and friends? We were willing to trust, but were sure to be deceived. Peace in that way was made a time of anxiety. Who is there among us who believes them?" And speaking to his own friends he added, "Do as you please. Now I sleep all night, but if you make peace I shall sleep in the day and watch all night."

Reliance could no longer be placed in the intentions of the Blackfoot nations. Their offers could not be accepted, for, as the chiefs agreed, "We are now as well armed as they are. When we had no guns, no iron heads for our arrows we used to yield to them. We were called cowards. They often came to our

lands to leave marks in blood. But now we must show ourselves on their prairies. At the time in the summer when the bisons become fat again we shall hunt not only upon the land we have always claimed, but far beyond. The hearts of our men are sore. We shall muster strong and make ourselves respected."

The chiefs kept their pledge and when the buffaloes became fat, in August, they formed a strong party and marched down into the prairies for the hunt. Their calculated inroads upon the territories of the enemy led to an encounter. They selected their ground behind a grassy ridge where they could conceal their own numbers and observe the enemy. The horses were used only to watch the movements of the enemy.

Thus thrown upon the offensive the Piegans and their allies would not yet venture forward; their object was first to ascertain the numbers that confronted them. For the first day they did nothing but dash about in small parties on horseback, attempting various raids over the hillside. But they could not draw the enemy out of his positions. As soon as the Piegans ascertained that the chances were about even, they determined upon a bold attack and formed up in single line at intervals of about three feet. Thus they advanced up the slope, singing

their war songs and dancing a wild dance with snake-like movements now to one side now to another. The Salish and their allies meanwhile stood ready for the battle. Their own war songs enlivened the echoes to the west, as they called forth their war manitous, the Sun and the Thunder. On their cheeks, on their breasts and on their thighs they had painted rain drops with red paint from the vermilion springs in the mountains, and the rain drops meant: "When I am wounded and the blood runs from my veins, may it not trouble me more than this red paint on my skin." On the shoulders of their horses they had drawn in red human hands so that their enemies might fall in front of them and raise their hands for mercy.

The songs and dances suddenly came to an end. The two lines now stood at close quarters. War whoops rang out and the warriors all at once fired their guns and discharged their arrows. The missiles from the hands of the excited fighters flew in all directions; but few were hurt. In the confused struggle that broke out at every point men and women from both camps met hand-to-hand, uttering unearthly yells. While the men stood the brunt of the battle their wives and sisters helped them, cheering them to the utmost of their power. Here a mother

led her sons to the attack; there a young woman collected arrows on the ground to replenish her brothers' quivers. Another shouted, "I thought that those great warriors were men. I was wrong. It is not worth while even for a woman to chase them."

Many warriors after a while lay scattered in the grass along the ridge, some dead, others wounded. The battle came to a halt and the Piegans retreated only with difficulty, carrying off their own fallen, and leaving behind some prisoners. Here they experienced their first real defeat.

The captives could expect no mercy at the hands of the victors. Fearful torments ending in death awaited them at the stake; their sufferings would make the blood curdle if they were described. To understand the bent of the natives for fiendish vindictiveness one should fathom the depth of their feelings at the unavenged loss of cherished relatives.

A Blackfoot warrior was tortured by his captors on Christmas day, 1812, and Ross Cox vividly relates with what undaunted courage he defied his tormentors to the bitter end. The Flatheads had gathered around the fire to witness the spectacle. Some of them heated an old gun barrel until it had turned red, and then burnt stripes as if to make a pattern on the legs, the thighs, the cheeks and the neck of the

prisoner, who stood perfectly motionless against a tree, to which he was tied. Then they cut the flesh about his nails and separated his finger joints one by one. The Blackfoot never winced. Instead, he laughed and goaded them on to further efforts. "My heart is strong," he would say; "You cannot hurt me, you are like fools. Try it again; you don't know how to do it. We torture your relatives far better, because we make them cry aloud like children."

A Flathead, who had lost one eye in an encounter years before, was standing sullenly near the fire. So the prisoner taunted him. "It was by my arrow that you lost your eye. Do you remember?" Thereupon the one-eyed brave darted at him and gouged one of his eyes out of its socket for revenge.

Undisturbed the Blackfoot now looked with his remaining eye at another of his tormentors and said, "It was I who killed your brother and scalped your father. Have you so soon forgotten? At this provocation the Flathead warrior sprung up like a panther, scalped his insulter and would have plunged his knife into his heart had he not been advised to desist.

It was now the turn of the head-chief to be insulted by the bleeding prisoner at the stake, "It was I that made your wife a slave last year. We put out her

eyes, tore out her tongue and treated her like a dog." A shriek of rage greeted these words. The chief seized his gun and before the sentence was complete shot a ball through the prisoner's heart, thus ending his frightful torments.

Blood-revenge was not enough to wipe out the sorrow of this highly respected chief. At the memory of his loss he retired to the woods and there, in the deepest solitude, he called on the soul of his deceased wife to appear to him for the last time, as she was now free to proceed upon the trail to the land of the dead. Time did not efface his grief, and his hatred of the Blackfeet, like that of his warriors, was so intense, so deep, that no permanent peace could ever be patched up. Murder and revenge had to swing from side to side like a fatal pendulum until there were but few fighters left.

If for many decades the Blackfeet could repel invasions and terrorize everyone, white man or Indian, they ultimately had to face adversity at the hands of many enemies who formed alliances for self-protection against the common foe. The magic-like ring of their frontiers once imperilled, the warriors could no longer parry all the blows aimed at their scattered camp-fires. Scarlet fever and smallpox carried off thousands, and disasters multiplied from year

to year until they sat despondent in deep mourning with their hair cut and their faces blackened. The year 1845 alone, according to Father De Smet, who visited them, proved a particularly sad one in their annals. In two skirmishes with the Flatheads in the west they lost twenty-one men; the Crees in the east carried off twenty-seven scalps and a great many of their horses; and the Crows, in the south, stunned them with a mortal blow when they massacred the entire Little Robe band consisting of fifty families, and carried away into captivity nearly two hundred women and children.

It has been the Indians' own folly not to grasp the trend of their destiny when they first encountered the white people. Here they stood confronted with a race whose destructive powers and unconscious selfishness would gradually invade their lands and their souls in such a way as to smother them out of existence. The deadly struggle had begun at the first council-fire when the newcomers, as they smoked the calumet of peace with their native hosts, handed them guns and ammunition, introduced fire-water, fanned the smouldering embers of ancient racial animosities, and unwittingly spread abroad the germs of deadly diseases so far unknown in the land. Wisdom called for peace, solidarity and self-protec-

MRS. HALLOWAY
INDIAN NAME NOT KNOWN
STONY INDIAN WOMAN

tion, at this crucial moment. But, like some other races, the Indians were driven by blind impulses to self-destruction, only to suit their conquerors. Their wars, indeed, never helped any of them. They did not improve the hunting nor safeguard the ancient frontiers. Their only result was to strip the country of its native occupants, bleeding the contending nations to such a degree that to-day their scattered remnants are easily lost sight of altogether, in the turmoil of our modern life.

IV. Tchatka, the Stony Usurper

IV. Tchatka, the Stony Usurper

TCHATKA felt the lure of the white man's ways from the days of his youth. He never ceased to wonder at the enchanted existence of the pale-faced strangers recently arrived on the prairies. Whenever his tribe returned to the posts, year after year, he was fond of lurking around the counters to gaze at the goods displayed before his elders, the Stony hunters, and to feel with his hands the queer shapes of the trading wares never before seen in the land. Curiosity was far from unobtrusive among his kin, but it did not endure long. Novelty soon wore off. Indifference was the rule. Yet he, Tchatka, never seemed satisfied. His craving for new things persisted as he grew older, and his day dreams were of massive log houses in palisades, of flashy garments, powder and gun, knife and dagger, and fire-water to boot.

The fur-traders could not fail to notice his unusual attentions to all that concerned them. They took to him rather kindly for his youth, his good looks and his marked cleverness. The French voyageurs

laughed encouragingly at his attempts to conquer their vernacular and poked fun at his naive pursuits and persistent queries. "Le Gaucher," *Tchatka,* was the nickname they gave him, and as he was left-handed it passed on even among his own people.

His natural abilities soon marked him as a leader of men. His family, besides, was a large and influential one among the eastern Stonies, whose hunting-grounds in those days—around 1770—extended west of Lake Winnipeg. His uncles wanted to train him in the wilds, according to custom. The only careers contemplated were those of a hunter and a warrior. Privations and toil made of a man a successful hunter; courage was the warrior's own virtue. But they found him to be lazy and cowardly. He disregarded the dictates of ancient wisdom. So they shook their heads disapprovingly. His uncle Walking-Bow dismissed him with a threat.

The truth is that he cared little for pelts and scalps, the ruling ambition of the time. He had notions of his own. His imagination was ablaze with the new ways of life, the ways of the white strangers from the land of sunrise.

He often resorted to the nearest trading-post, forsaking his relatives for prolonged periods. By sheer persistence he managed to learn many truths, many

lies, and to unravel many puzzles. He finally penetrated the mysteries of the gun casting death at a distance, of powder tearing things to bits when it explodes, and of poison slowly bringing death when it is consumed with foods. Above all he never tired of listening to the tales of another world. The French servants around the stores were fond of telling stories. He sat gaping at what they said of vast wars across the seas, of boundless armies, of guns the size of trees, of generals commanding thunder and lightning, of witchcraft producing wonders and of kings and princes of fairyland basking in splendor and glory. The ambition some day to contemplate all these marvels with his own eyes deeply aroused him. But it also dawned upon him, after many disappointments, that the trail to the home of the mighty was long, almost endless, and strewn with pitfalls. He could not very long entertain the hope of becoming a white man himself or, even, living like a white man. Indians, it was easy to see, were not really wanted at the forts, except to procure furs, fish and buffalo meat from their own hunting grounds. And his services as messenger and guide did not seem sufficiently appreciated. He finally gambled on his last chance one day.

A chief's daughter in his own country always mar-

ried a chief's son. That was the custom. He himself was of good lineage, the nephew of Walking-Bow, whose fame as a powerful warrior had spread from the lakes to the mountains. And the chief-trader's daughter, he knew well, was still unwed. More than once he had seen her, watched her; he had gazed lovingly at her as she smiled to him. That is why he made up his mind. She would be his bride and thereafter he would live at the post, with the white men. So he came with presents for the would-be father-in-law. His proposal was listened to according to etiquette. But the bridal presents were returned before the morrow, to his utter dismay. He had thus courted defeat.

In the face of humiliation he managed to curb his wounded pride; he stayed on at the post for a while. So deep had been his childish hope that it could be smothered only by stages. Then a feeling of revenge crept into his heart, only to be silenced. An Indian is never in a hurry.

He turned away at last from the land of promise, slowly, very slowly. His uncles were still waiting for him on the prairies. To them he would return. He started off at night, unseen, disheartened. The heavy bundle on his back contained what was left of his former hopes, rich possessions for his life to come—

tobacco, a beaver hat, a red sash, a bright calico shirt, pills of slow and deadly poison, a double-bladed knife in a sheath, gun powder in buffalo horns and a prayer-book full of magic signs.

* * *

Failure had not crushed Tchatka's ambitions; it had only sharpened his faculties. He was no longer an inexperienced youth. The cunning exploitation of his new knowledge and strange crafts helped to enhance his prestige among his nomadic folk. Shrewdness was his supreme gift, if ever it was in an Indian. He possessed the white man's "power," every one could see. Charms and amulets worked miracles in his hands. He muttered incantations at night and communed with the spirits above, the powerful manitous from the east. The potency of his magic bundle in itself was enough to inspire respect to friend and foe alike.

Prophecy had always induced timid believers to submit in advance to the dictates of fate. No one dared resist the supernatural powers. To Tchatka it appealed as the easiest means for him to achieve domination. So he became a seer and a sorcerer. To further his ends he resorted alone to secret spots, had visions, associated with jugglers and medicine-men

and sought young men who were willing to serve him blindly as disciples.

Vigorous and strong as he was, he always avoided danger. He sat on a hill or in a grove where he could safely follow the progress of the battle, while the warriors fought in the plain. In case of defeat he was the first to escape, as a fleet horse always stood behind him. Others were left to their own fortunes. To disarm censure he would say, "I am not a fighter, I will never be. My power is in my medicine." And indeed he was a great sorcerer. Every day added to his growing fame. Future events he could foretell as if reading them out of his prayer-book. His uncanny wisdom knew no bounds. He could see far away beyond the sky-line. What the others failed to detect were the means at his command, the young spies who served him as secret messengers to get wind of news. Fair probabilities were a safe guide to his foresight; so his predictions seldom failed.

The rigid customs that regulated the choice of civil and war chiefs at first baffled his ingenuity. Scalps and wounds from the battlefields alone recommended the new elects to the tribal councils. And he could show none. His black arts would not serve as substitutes. But the obstacle was overcome. Walking-Bow, his uncle, had enough influence to help him in

defiance of all precedents. So that he was finally admitted to sit among the brave and wise men of the nation.

The road to higher dignities seemed too uncertain for him. Others, young and old, excelled him in the ancient pursuits of war and peace. Their authority was so entrenched that it could not be disputed. What should he do? The reply was not long in coming. He would avail himself of his gift of foretelling the future and his power of destroying life with poison for his own advancement. Thus it came about that in prophetic spells he would say, "This chief has not long to live; so my manitou has told me." And the unfortunate leader whose name had been uttered would fall the victim of a mysterious ailment after weeks, sometimes months, of mental agony. All his rivals disappeared in the same way, one after another. Suspicion and the desire of retaliation more than once brought peril near him. Anger smouldered in many breasts. But he inspired fear, as one who can dispose of life. Many were they who thought it best to propitiate him by the offer of presents, buffalo meat, horses and trophies.

Walking-Bow, the head-chief, at times had to shield him against rivals and foes at home. He used his influence to help him in his rapid rise to power.

No one dared oppose his will, for his lofty stature, his bravery and violence defied resistance. Scalps taken from the enemy adorned his headdress, his robe, his spear and the saddle of his steed. Tchatka more than any other feared his anger. By flattery and deceit, by subservience to all his desires and fancies he succeeded in winning his confidence and friendship. They often travelled together and gave one another feasts and banquets in which the greatest harmony always prevailed. Jealous as Tchatka was of Walking-Bow's rank he could not dispense with him until all those opposing his march to the supreme power in the tribe had been removed.

His emissaries sighted a camp of Blackfeet hunters one day. From their description he knew that the warriors of his own tribe could surprise them and win a decisive victory. The moment had arrived for him to foretell the event and to strike a supreme blow. He invited his uncle to a feast and presented him with a poisoned dish of buffalo tongues. The fatal meal having been consumed to the last mouthful according to the custom, it could not fail to produce its effects after a few hours. Thus would be removed the last obstacle left in his path .

Walking-Bow had no sooner departed after the banquet than his nephew summoned all the leading

warriors to his lodge in great haste. Word went round that grave events impended, for the manitous had given warning. Tchatka appeared before them attired for the first time with all his finery—the flowing calico shirt, the red sash around his waist, the tall beaver hat on his head and the open prayer-book in his hand. His manitou the Thunder stood in the center of the lodge near the fire, under the shape of a magic stone painted red and surrounded by a fence of short sticks. At the sight of these strange objects the assembly sat dumb with awe, and the inspired seer delivered his prophecy as if under a spell. He could see far away and tell what was to happen. A camp of the enemy stood near a river, at a few days' journey. The Stonies could take it by surprise and capture many scalps. Time had come for them at last to avenge previous defeats. But that was not all. A most valiant brave present at the assembly would fall this very night never to rise again, and at the very moment of his death the Thunder manitou would blow up to pieces with a dreadful noise, to accompany the departing soul into the world of spirits. Another chief, more favoured by the manitous, would step into his place for the good of all the nation.

A dismal silence greeted these prophetic words. Victory and revenge naturally aroused their expecta-

tions, but in spite of it all dread appeared on every countenance. Who was to fall that very night? No one could tell, as many leaders were almost the equals of the head-chief. Not even Walking-Bow had any clear idea of his own doom. But no doubt could be entertained as to the prophecy; too many others had already proved true. The warriors withdrew in silence and gloom. Dark apprehensions invaded the camp with the shades of night.

At midnight a messenger came running to Tchatka's lodge, "Come, come! Walking-Bow is ill, very ill." But the wily seer could not so easily be induced to affront danger. His uncle, he knew, now suspected his treachery. He would stretch him dead at his feet while he still possessed enough strength. So he replied, "Go and tell him that my visit would not help him. And I could not at this moment leave my manitou alone."

The prey of terrible convulsions, Walking-Bow declared to the friends and relatives surrounding him, "I suspect him, my nephew." Consternation and tumult spread to every lodge. Some warriors uttered frightful yells, vowed speedy revenge and resorted to Tchatka's quarters. The seer, still attired in his finery, stood alone near the fire, facing his Thunder manitou. At the news of his uncle's ordeal

ALBIN
INDIAN NAME NOT KNOWN
KOOTENAY INDIAN

the lodge. Runners from Walking-Bow's tent came by at intervals, shouting, "The chief utters naught but shrieks of rage against his nephew . . . He is in convulsions . . . He is growing more feeble; his speech is gone . . . He is in agony."

Cries of despair responded to the last message: "He is dead!" And the red stone by the fire burst into a thousand fragments with the noise of thunder. It filled the lodge with fire and cinders, severely wounding those who sat near and frightening the others into a wild stampede. Tchatka's powers once more stood vindicated in the eyes of all. The feeling of revenge gave way to one of terror and reverence. No one approached him but with respect. His manitou being the Thunder, he now received the name of "Great Medicine."

At the back of his mind Tchatka could congratulate himself on his good fortune. Simple though his deceits would have appeared to any white man they meant witchcraft to his unspoilt folk. The powers of gun-powder were still a mystery to them. Even if they had known how Tchatka had drilled a hole in the stone, filled it with nearly a pound of powder and fired the train from a safe distance in the dark, his prestige would not have been much lessened in their eyes. To them he was the greatest sorcerer ever

known. His second sight encompassed both the future and the past, and his incantations reached beyond the world of the living into that of the dead.

* * *

Tchatka remained in deep seclusion the day that followed his uncle's death. No one but his secret spies dared approach him. The whole of the second day the same mysterious silence continued around his abode. Conjectures added to the expectancy of new marvels.

The same ominous quiet lasted through the night, until the morning of the third day. Some warriors then seemed again to be wavering between fear and vindictive hatred; others, perhaps less credulous, cast threatening glances in the direction of the medicine lodge. Great uneasiness now spread to every one, and it seemed as if the band was about to split into two independent parties, to avoid strife. "Watch the Great-Medicine lodge!" was the word that passed around about sunset. Agitation ceased all at once. What was the powerful Tchatka doing? None would venture to tell.

The sky was overcast. Dark clouds speeded up from the north-east accompanied by flashes of lightning and threatening rumbles in the distance. The Thunder manitou, in the belief of many, was again

approaching the Stony encampment at a quick pace. Tchatka, on his side, awaited for the elements to add their pageantry to the solemn display of his unearthly powers. Breathless anxiety was the best background for the triumph of witchcraft, and he was conscious of his renewed good fortune.

When the storm was about to break out, at midnight, a deep sound from the seer's lodge startled the people, a sound like that of a large water drum. It was loud enough to be heard throughout the camp. Tchatka's voice rose gradually and the meaningless syllables he uttered were those of a new incantation. Runners now summoned the warriors to the Great-Medicine lodge, and while the assembly gathered according to etiquette, wind, rain and thunder roared mightily in unison.

At the back of the lodge stood Tchatka, a head-dress of swan's down on his head. His left hand deftly beat a *tchantcheega*—a huge drum made of a hollow tree, about three feet high, with a goat skin tightly stretched and pegged at one end. Powerful new manitous, Grizzly-Bear and Buffalo-Bull were painted yellow and red on the bleached skin, and on the wood all around a large number of small human faces were traced in black outline to represent Black-foot heads.

Apparently unaware of the warriors' entry into the lodge he continued his incantation for a while, and then, when all were seated in a half-circle opposite to him, he kneeled down in the manner of a Christian and offered thanksgivings to the Great Spirit and his new protectors, the Grizzly and the Buffalo, for their many favours.

Standing up defiantly while thunder and storm raged outside, he intoned a vehement war song. His lips were dyed red with vermilion to indicate that the spirit of war was in his breath and that his thirst was only for blood, the blood of the enemy.

"Listen, listen to my dream, warriors and friends," he cried; "Listen!" And they replied, "Ho, ho! we do." "For three days," he continued, "three days and three nights, I dreamed. My body and my soul left this land and travelled westwards to the abode of spirits and ghosts. There I have beheld frightful scenes, I have heard sighs, moans and lamentations, I have walked among the dead whose bones whiten the plains and are gnawed by the wolves in their lairs. The spirits of the dead were those of our dear relatives, our unavenged warriors, women and children, those that have fallen by the hand of our enemies, the Blackfeet. I see you tremble. Do you want to hear what they told me, or are you too frightened?"

A very old sorcerer, perhaps a confederate of Tchatka, replied, "Young man, my friend, I believe in your words, for you always speak the truth. Your power is great, for Thunder and Lightning obey your command. Speak, if you love your tribe, speak forth! We know that danger is near; you have already warned us. I am an old man now, my limbs are feeble, but my mind is still clear. Speak! we listen to your words. What have the dead told you when you heard their moans and lamentations?"

With inspiring confidence Tchatka related the tale of his dream. "Let those who have ears listen once for all. There is no time to lose. The souls of our massacred relatives cannot go to the land of rest until they are avenged in blood. They wander up and down in the dark through barren deserts, without food for subsistence. They are cold, thirsty and hungry. We are the cause of their torments, since we dare not start on the war path against our foes, and they complain of our forgetfulness. My limbs trembled at their sight and my hair stood up. A friendly soul touched my hand and said, 'Tchatka, we know you. You are a great sorcerer. It is in your power to bring our deliverance. When you return to our people tell them what you have seen. In your *tipi* you will find your new manitou, the drum

Tchantcheega. Arise and beat it when the storm breaks out, at night. We shall be near. Tell the warriors to be ready, to start on the war-path at daybreak, for thirty Blackfeet tents stand at the source of the Milk River, not far away. Victory shall be yours. Revenge will end our sufferings.' Thus the ghosts have spoken, and when I recovered my senses I found the drum *Tchantcheega* at my feet. Now you have heard the truth, friends and relatives. What shall you do? I have spoken."

The Stony warriors rose to the last man before Tchatka's words were fully spoken. War was like the breath of their nostrils. They felt on their own conscience the reproach of unavenged deaths. Their hatred of the Blackfeet was deep, unconquered. A rousing war-whoop went up first in the medicine lodge, then outside, in the other lodges throughout the camp, and while the wind, rain and thunder were raging in the sky the blood-curdling scalp dance circled wildly around the fire.

No time for sleep now. The women mended the moccasins, the leggings, and prepared the food bags. The men sharpened the points of their lances, filled their quivers with arrows, smeared their tomahawks with paint, chanted invocations to their friendly manitous, and daubed their faces with vermilion.

Tchatka now remained alone, sitting silent within his tent, near his big drum.

Four hundred warriors stood ready to start at daybreak, with their horses bridled and saddled. As they could not see Tchatka, they sent a delegate to his lodge, asking him to take the lead. But he replied, flattered though he was, "No, what you ask me cannot be done. A seer am I, not a warrior. My place now is near *Tchantcheega,* the drum. Choose one from amongst yourselves." More delegates came forth, even from the families of his former rivals. They prayed, they insisted that no other but he could lead them to success. Their best leaders were gone; Walking-Bow lived no more. He should stand up in their place. "Why should it be so?" he protested; "only yesterday your tomahawks were raised over my head. You wanted to shed my blood because I had foreseen what was to happen. You did not believe my words." But it was all different now. Never had they felt more enthusiasm, more confidence in their good fortune. The seer's promises were truth itself, and the opportunity had at last arrived to wipe out their shame and avenge the death of their fallen relatives. Tchatka surrendered to their entreaties in the end, but only after they had promised him unquestioning confidence and accepted him as head-chief of the whole tribe.

He then summoned one of his faithful spies to saddle his good steed. When it was done he fastened his drum behind the saddle and intoned his war chant. With no other weapon than his dagger concealed in its sheath under his garments he joined his band, and all could gaze in the light of day upon the painted Blackfoot heads on the drum, the heads that were soon to be in their hands.

The rest of the day and the following night the Stony warriors travelled with the greatest precaution, for fear of a surprise. They rested at dawn, while the scouts beat the surrounding country and planted rods in their path so as to indicate what direction to follow.

Before the party resumed the march Tchatka declared, so that every one might hear, "If my predictions come true we shall tear from the enemy as many scalps as there are on my drum. We shall see the great chief of the Blackfeet as he appears here, without scalp and without hands. All this is to happen before I have slept twice on the trail."

Some time before sunset a thick grove could be discerned in the distance on the edge of a small stream. A few scouts ventured forward to guard their friends against surprise attacks. Upon finding the place unoccupied they erected a parapet of dried tree trunks

and branches all around so as to make it into an encampment for a peaceful night. By a stroke of good luck a vast herd of buffalo came by in the morning and it was easy to replenish the stock of provisions for several days to come.

Tchatka meanwhile kept in constant touch with his runners. After a long day's march, he started to beat his drum gently, and the warriors at once gathered around him. As they stood near the gentle slope of a low hill he raised his left hand, pointing beyond. "There you shall see the first signs—the mark of their feet." And indeed, they discovered the tracks of nearly a hundred horses. The tracks were fresh; so the enemy could not be far. Their ardour for the battle increased ten-fold.

It was disappointing not to discover the Blackfeet the next day, nor the day that followed. All the runners but one had returned without having sighted anybody. Some of the older warriors murmured, "The appointed day has passed and yet what have we seen?" Another replied in jest, "Yes, we have seen tracks of wild horses that lead nowhere." Tchatka silenced them all, saying, "The time is not passed. I have slept only once on the trail. Rather say, the time has arrived, you men of great courage but little wisdom! Where do you expect to find the

tipis of the enemy, on the open plain where you hunt the buffalo or in the groves where you camp at night? Perhaps on the hill tops in the sight of all? The bear and the cougar hide their offsprings in their dens; the wolf, in a hole. The goat covers them up with hay. When you hunt the deer do you peep through the bush and the briars? In the pursuit of the fox and the badger do you seek the lairs where they are usually found? And where do you expect the Blackfeet to leave the tents that shelter their women and children while they are out after the buffalo?" Pointing his hand to a low forest beyond a large rock, at the end of the prairie, he concluded, "This is the rock I have seen in my dream."

Some of the most experienced men were at once despatched towards the forest, under the cover of dusk. They returned before midnight with news that thrilled the hearts of all. "So it is, so it is, we have found the Blackfoot encampment, thirty lodges in all, occupied by old men, women and children." The rest of the night was spent in war dances and invocations to the manitous at the sound of the big *Tchantcheega.*

The whole force of the Stonies surrounded the thirty Blackfoot lodges at daybreak, and the defenceless occupants were frightened out of their sleep by

unearthly yells from every side. A handful of boys and women had the desperate courage to fight against all odds. The battle was short and the outcome bloody and hideous beyond words. The hour of sweet revenge had come, and the Stonies bathed their hands and their arms in warm blood. Only two young men escaped death or capture by taking to flight across the river. The manes of the victors' relatives were now freed, on their way to the happy hunting grounds, and the number of scalps taken exceeded the marks on the seer's drum.

When there was only blood and ruin left in the Blackfeet camp, the Stonies started back, past the forest and the rock. Every heart was throbbing with savage joy, and yet there was one who could be heard remarking, "We have slaughtered old men, women and children, but we have not encountered the Blackfoot head-chief as we were promised." "His picture is on Tchatka's drum, without scalp and without hands," added another. These words were reported to Tchatka, who assembled his warriors in the shade of the great rock. "Listen!" he said, "there are still some among you who disbelieve my word and doubt the power of my manitous. Let them beware, for my protectors the Grizzly and the Buffalo may soon turn against them in their wrath!

Look at my drum again. Here are the heads of those you have killed and here is the Blackfoot chief who is soon to die at our hands. We have not yet come to the end of the trail."

A shower fell at night and a fog obscured the horizon in the morning. So dense was the fog about noon that the warriors found it unsafe to proceed single file. They advanced in a body preceded by their scouts the tracks of whose horses they followed.

A shot from the front line suddenly warned them that an attack had commenced. They rushed forward to join the combatants, and found a band of thirty Blackfeet warriors, whom the fog had separated from their companions, fighting their vanguard. The struggle was swift and deadly.

Before Tchatka had time to think of his own safety, he found himself enveloped in the midst of fighters, unable to seek shelter anywhere. His horse tumbled under him and he fell to the ground. A Blackfoot of lofty stature and great strength hurled his spear at him. The weapon grazed his head and sank quivering into the earth. Then he dashed for him, knife in hand. Tchatka by then had had time to jump to his feet and draw his double-bladed knife from its sheath. Coward as he was he found himself compelled against his own choice to fight for his life. And

he did fight with great boldness and skill. He seized the wrist of his adversary and managed to hold the knife off his own body.

When the battle in the front line had ceased, the Stonies returned to look for their chief, whom they had lost sight of. They found him struggling arm in arm, on the ground, with a powerful enemy. The Blackfoot at this moment disengaged his arm and lifted his knife for a fatal thrust. But a tomahawk from behind stretched him unconscious, and Tchatka in his turn raised his own knife, shouting, "Friends, behold the chief of the Blackfeet!" and he plunged the blade into his heart. With the same blood-stained knife he scalped him and cut his hands off, to fulfil the prophecy which has ever since been retold among the Stonies. Then he said, "Here was Bear's-Foot, the terror of our own people for so many years," and he pulled off the white man's medal which hung from his neck as a mark of distinction. His warriors, in commemoration of this, now conferred upon him the name of *Minayonka,* "the Knife-holder."

After so swift and overwhelming a victory they all returned home loaded with trophies. The exultation of the whole tribe ran so high that public rejoicing lasted for a whole moon; scalp dances, songs and thanksgivings were repeated a hundred times.

Tchatka's new name, Minayonka, "The Knife-holder", was celebrated in every mouth. Never had the nation known such a famous leader, warrior and sorcerer all at once. His ambition was fulfilled at last, for he was entrusted with the supreme, undivided authority over the affairs of the nation.

To mark his triumph in his own way, Tchatka selected three wives on the same day, without even considering that two of them were already betrothed to two of his influential warriors. Protests were not heeded, and the parents of the brides felt so honoured by the head chief's choice that they forgot their former pledges and took their daughters to his lodge as soon as an invitation was received. To curb discontent and restore peace in every household Tchatka decided to start for the hunt, but not without leaving orders to the most trusted of his partisans to poison his two rival pretenders in his absence.

Upon his return he feigned surprise at the news of the mysterious death of the pretenders, and only concluded, "So it always happens. The Manitous have done it. Let those who contradict me, who despise my power, remember it. Their danger is near."

Powerful and satisfied as he should have been, Tchatka still felt restless in his heart. The recollection of his youthful disappointments at the fur

traders' establishment—Fort Union—was still alive in his memory. But he could not yet determine what was the wisest course: seek revenge or swallow his resentment for fear of the white man's superior might. Secret misgivings, besides, haunted his mind. His drum *Tchantcheega* was lost to him; it had been split and destroyed under the body of his fallen steed, on the battlefield. The mishap was of slight importance to him. Still he could not forget it, and in time it loomed up in his imagination as an omen, an evil omen, for his life to come.

* * *

Success and good fortune for over two score years generally favoured Tchatka in his warlike ventures. His repute travelled far on the western plains, and he inspired dread in the camps of the enemies of his nation. When his warriors were defeated, as sometimes happened, he was invariably the first to take to flight, afterwards to state as an excuse that his new manitou, the Badger, had carried him away in spite of himself. No one but the most reckless, indeed, would have dared question his word, for sudden and mysterious death never failed to overtake his domestic opponents. He held the Stony tribes under the sway of his domination and tyranny.

GEORGIE HUNTER
INDIAN NAME NOT KNOWN
STONY INDIAN GIRL

His first great reverse occurred in the year 1830. It was unexpected and startling. Sixty of his warriors slain and sixty more left wounded in the hands of the Blackfeet was a heavy toll for a single encounter. Even with the utmost ingenuity, his false promises of victory could hardly be excused. A number of leading families went into deep mourning. Dismay soon gave way to resentment, to outspoken agitation. From this black day on the prestige of the Stonies and their famous leader seemed to wane.

Tchatka deemed it imperative to plan a bold stroke in a new direction. Without any loss of time he must retrieve his great loss, arouse his warriors out of their despondency, and "cover the dead," so that the period of mourning of the aggrieved relatives might come to an end.

He retired to his sacred lodge in anticipation of new dreams, new visions of victory. This time his inner determination moved against the white traders stationed at Fort Union, the post where his early ambitions had encountered defeat. Badger, his manitou, had ceased to serve his purpose, so he called back his old-time protectors, Thunder, Grizzly-Bear and Buffalo-Bull. The mere allusion to their familiar names would spur confidence and instil new vigour in faltering hearts.

Summoned to his lodge in the name of powerful manitous, the tribal leaders and the warriors heard of a new war adventure, to the east. Untold riches were to fall into their hands without bloodshed, in a single night. Spoils would be so abundant that the horses of the whole tribe could not drag them all on their "travois". The new prophecy was bound to be true, for Tchatka's reliable manitous of old now had returned from their prolonged retreat. The raid contemplated against the trading establishment, Fort Union, was entirely devoid of risk. The occupants had no reason to be suspicious, of standing on their guard, since the friendliest relations with all natives had always prevailed. The prize lay within the grasp of the Stonies, but on one condition only: they must unreservedly agree with the plan of their chief and remain blindly faithful to the very end. They all pledged themselves to the most servile obedience. Brighter days were in sight.

Escorted by three hundred of his best warriors, Tchatka started in the direction of the fort, which stood on the prairie not many days off. His scheme was to approach the traders with the customary amenities, then overwhelm their small force at night and take possession of the two years' stock of goods which had just arrived for the needs of the fur trade.

The Stonies were greeted at the Fort as on former occasions. The calumet was lit and handed over by the chief trader to the leading visitor, Tchatka, who passed it on to his followers without drawing a whiff of the white smoke like the others. This apparent oversight was barely noticeable, and the usual precaution of disarming the native visitors for the night and placing their weapons under lock and key was not even resorted to; Tchatka's old-time friendship for the white people sufficed to remove all suspicion. The guns and ammunition he wanted were to be used against the Gros-Ventre, an unfriendly nation whom his warriors were now on their way to attack on the Missouri River. Daybreak would again see his party on the march.

By a shrewdly concerted plan, however, the dusky warriors had arranged to retire to the various rooms of the establishment for the night. To Tchatka and a faithful follower was reserved the keeping of a small detached dwelling within the Fort's enclosure. In that house resided a white woman whose life he wanted to spare, for he remembered her from the time of his youth. She was to be his prisoner, perhaps his wife in spite of the fact that she was married—for he had never forgotten her as the late chief-factor's daughter, the very one who had

been ignominiously refused him at the time of his juvenile illusions, long ago. All the other residents were to be massacred at a given signal before the break of day.

A Stony runner whose sister was married to a white servant at the fort could not silence his brotherly feelings. He invited her in deep secrecy to resort to his room for the night. But, as she could not understand his meaning, he explained that all her white friends were to perish before sunrise. She promised to follow him, but, instead, hastened to confide in her husband, whom she wanted to save from death.

The plot at this stage could no longer remain a secret. It reached the authorities in the twinkle of an eye. Orders from headquarters were whispered around quietly and swiftly. Every white man was armed to the teeth, the guns were loaded, and the two bastions were made ready for a siege. All hopes for a successful resistance might have been vain but for a singularly fortunate coincidence; a number of Canadian employees, altogether about eighty, had arrived a few days before from the northern posts to receive their share of the newly arrived trading goods. Their presence now made a great difference; it offered the only safeguard of the moment.

Mr. Denig, the chief trader, summoned Tchatka and a few of his accomplices to appear before him, as soon as all preparations were complete. He reproached them with their treachery. They wanted to stab their own friends and protectors in the back. How could he place further reliance in them, since they acted as liars and traitors? They deserved only contempt. Their choice now was either to quit the fort forthwith or be destroyed by the big guns that were levelled at them from every side. Dumbfounded, the warriors instantly decided to withdraw, even without consulting their guilty leader, who was deeply vexed and confused at the failure of his wonderful plot.

The blow to the great seer's prestige among his own people was decisive, final. Anger and defiance could no longer be suppressed, particularly since the supply of poison in his medicine bag was nearly exhausted.

In the year that followed he succeeded in inducing many of his warriors to start for the conquest of a village of Mandans, near Fort Clarke. "We must offer them the calumet of peace," he said; "they will be only too pleased to accept it, for they are weak and helpless. Our friendship would be a blessing for them in their misfortunes. They live in fear of the

Sioux, their enemies, against whom they cannot muster enough warriors. When they have smoked the calumet, let us scatter throughout their village and fall upon them. They cannot avoid our blows. The Mandans shall cease to exist. Their horses, their lands and all they possess shall be ours."

To retrieve their fortunes the Stonies were only too ready to listen to rash counsels. They must wipe out their shame, and this was their opportunity. The Mandans could not offer much resistance. So Tchatka again found himself on the warpath with a small band of faithful followers.

They stopped on a hill, when they arrived in sight of the Mandan village, and sent off a delegation on an errand of peace, with a small flag and a calumet of red stone. The delegates and their hosts sat in council and smoked until reconciliation was complete.

They were still recounting their glorious war deeds of the past, as always happened in peace reunions, when a war whoop rang out from behind the Stony position on the hill outside the village. The whole assembly was taken by surprise; no one could understand, and the delegates were sadly perplexed, now looking one way, now another.

A party of several hundred Arikaras, the neighbours and new friends of the Mandans, had spied the

coming of their ancient foes the Stonies and rushed upon them with deadly blows from behind while they were plotting black treachery. The slaughter no sooner ended than the Arikaras gazed around, enquiring, "Where is he, Tchatka, the Knife-Holder?" Nowhere could his body be found, neither on the hill nor in the village below. "There I see him!" shouted a scout; "There he is fleeing on his horse towards the forest." Some Arikaras darted after him in hot pursuit, firing repeatedly until his horse fell under him. He rose instantly and ran for his life towards the forest nearby. It was his only chance. No longer young, he could nevertheless run as fast as a deer. Fear gave wings to his heels, as he managed to reach cover before he was overtaken. Finding him so swift on foot his disappointed pursuers nick-named him *Tatokahnan,* meaning "Wild-goat" in his own language, the goat being the fleetest animal they knew.

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The times had changed. Tchatka remained silent when he returned alone, on foot, to his tribe. He faced the future with mixed feelings. In the absence of sufficient warriors his people now were to live in constant fear of further disasters, perhaps total extermination. His years were perceptibly advancing. His manitous remained silent for long periods as if

they had forsaken him, and he seldom attempted to foretell the future. His sacred lodge was no longer the resort of warriors and chiefs. Many were they who ventured to defy his orders, for it became known that such transgressions did not spell death as they had done for so many years.

At the head of a small party of hunters Tchatka appeared once again at Fort Union, this time to trade pelts. He secretly offered the clerk in charge a large pile of valuable furs for a little tobacco—"My heart is sick!" he said—, and a large quantity of poison at whatever cost. Without this powerful charm, he claimed, the Stonies were hopelessly lost, since they would no longer obey orders and stand up against their enemies. His proposition aroused horror and contempt. Severe rebukes for his untold atrocities only hardened his heart. He smiled grimly and retorted, "I still have some in my medicine bag," and left the fort with unmistakable signs of discontent.

An epidemic of smallpox, the most dreadful and ruinous of the century, broke out in the spring of 1838 and spread its ravages to every Indian camp. In a single season, the Crows and the Blackfeet lost ten thousand of their numbers. Of six hundred Mandan warriors only thirty survived. The Stony braves were reduced from more than a thousand to a mere handful capable of bearing arms.

Evil days had come to the land. Tchatka's nation had almost vanished. His two sons had fallen in the Mandan adventure. No one worth while was left for him to command or, if need be, to poison. His sadly reduced band of Eastern Stonies congregated one day and decided to migrate westward, towards the foothills. Their only salvation could be found in their union with another branch of their nation, the "Gens-du-Nord," the Northern People.

After all these disasters Tchatka no longer concerned himself with public affairs. He lived in silence and retirement. Existence seemed a burden to him. But he remained a great medicine-man, a great seer, in the eyes of all, at home or abroad. His mere presence inspired awe and reverence even to those who once had to bear the weight of his oppression.

When the "Northern People" repaired to Fort Union for the barter of furs, in the autumn of 1843, the first among them to appear at the gate and to shake hands with Mr. Denig was no other than old Tchatka. "Friend," said the visitor, "here is the place where I have always wanted to live, to die, among the friends of my youth." Little importance was attached to these words, as the old chief seemed well and unusually cheerful.

"Did you understand, friend?" he enquired after a long while. "Never again shall I visit your wonderful fort. Never shall I see the country of the white man across the sea. My time is passed." At this Mr. Denig felt uncomfortable, and he enquired again about his visitor. The Stonies all agreed that he was in good health, as ever. Only this. Before leaving the village he had a vision. "My end is fast approaching," he had predicted; "Before many sunsets my soul shall depart for the unseen prairies of our dead relatives."

Tchatka's words were not without a hidden meaning, the traders knew only too well. As they had not forgotten his black treachery they feared a new plot. So Mr. Denig called him aside and questioned him. But he only smiled despondently. He was well and contented; he wanted nothing of the white man's goods. Life now seemed empty and useless. A pipeful of tobacco was all he desired, as he had arrived at the end of his long journey. "My manitous all, Thunder, Grizzly-Bear, Buffalo-Bull and Badger are near. I have seen them last night. They are calling me. I must go!"

He took a hearty supper at night and slept peacefully while his friends enjoyed a Buffalo dance and a Prairie-chicken dance outside, in the open. The next morning he came to greet Mr. Denig, and spat blood

BEN KAKUITTS
LAST BUFFALOE OR TATANKA-OHAGAO
STONY INDIAN

at his feet. It was useless to offer him medicine. He left the room forthwith and walked out to the edge of the river, where some children were playing.

A boy ran in to say, "The chief is sick; he is spitting blood." Those who went out found Tchatka in the convulsions of death, rolling on the ground with his mouth foaming. They placed him on a sleigh and started at once for the Indian camp. He died on the way, in terrible torments—just as had happened to so many of his victims.

"As he lived, he died," so conclude Mr. Denig and Father De Smet, his early biographers.

His lifeless body was carried off to the village of the "Northern People." After memorable ceremonies, it was wrapped up in a scarlet blanket and a buffalo robe embroidered with porcupine quills. Then it was raised and fastened to the limbs of a large tree, while the multitude shed tears and broke into lamentations.

The place where Tchatka's remains reposed was an object of deep veneration for the Stonies, even many years after he had passed. The sacred tree, in their deep-rooted belief, was still guarded by his shadow, whose power it was to procure an abundance of buffalo to the living generation or, if angered, to drive the herds away from the country. "Hence," Father

De Smet concludes, "whenever they pass near, they offer sacrifices and oblations. They present the calumet to the manes of Tchatka, the greatest man that ever visited their nation."

V. Crestfallen Indians

V. Crestfallen Indians

WHEN first discovered the Stonies were pure nomads; like all the other prairie tribes, they knew no fixed abode within their far distant national boundaries. Bedouin-like, they shifted their skin *tipis* incessantly from place to place under stars that were never quite the same. For subsistence they depended almost exclusively upon the bounties of the buffalo hunt and had little fear of starvation as long as the herds continued to swarm over the plains in large numbers.

Before the appearance of the "cayuse" and the gun, the capture of the buffalo naturally required greater exertions on the part of the hunters, who had recourse to familiar stratagems. Now they would crawl singly to the outskirts of the herd and shoot the largest of the animals as they grazed; or they would "make a calf," one man covering his back with a skin, squatting down and bleating like a calf to attract the cows towards his companion lying in ambush. By far the most popular method, however, was to organize in large parties, and stampede the herd to-

wards steep river banks or high cliffs over which the animals tumbled pell-mell to destruction. Many spots on the plains were whitened with the bleached bones of countless buffaloes thus exterminated.

Some of the mountain tribes, as we have seen, also resorted twice a year to the prairies for their share of the booty. The Upper Kootenays, for instance, travelled alone or with their allies, the Flatheads, through the Kootenay pass (where Elko now stands), on the Grave Creek pass (just south of the boundary), and reached as far as the Sweet Grass hills in Montana. There they hunted the buffalo and dried the meat in the sun instead of making it into pemmican after the manner of the Stonies.

But the buffalo hunt provided them with only part of their subsistence; a very little in the case of the Lower Kootenays—the Lake Kootenays, Arcs-à-plat or Flatbows—, as they seldom crossed the mountains. Like most north-western tribes, they congregated along the canyons in the summer, at the time when the five varieties of salmon ran in turn up to the spawning bottoms at the headquarters of the Columbia River, about 1,400 miles from the sea coast. Here prevailed the greatest activity in the year: the men watched on their platforms, gaffed or speared the fish, or caught them in weirs; and the women

split, dried and smoked them on green willow racks for preservation.

Salmon were so plentiful, gathering in such incredible numbers at the spawning grounds near the headwaters, that it was an easy task, particularly for the Upper Kootenays, to replenish their stores. Indeed the vertebra of the fish rotted every year in layers so thick as to form "ridges" that even yet have not entirely disappeared at the place named "Salmon Beds"—now Athalmer townsite—, though for a long time now the annual run of the salmon has dwindled to nothing.

The freshwater ling—an evil-looking fish, large, scaleless, and meaty—was also a favourite food-staple, particularly in the case of the lake tribes. The Kootenays used to camp on the ice in midwinter, when the ling was most abundant, and catch it with line and hooks through water holes. As many as fifty *tipis,* we are told, annually gathered for that purpose at the mouth of Windermere Creek alone.

Many more occupations filled up the strenuous lives of the mountain people throughout the year. Besides their menial tasks the women had to attend to matters of clothing and food preparation. In due season they went out with long crooked sticks and dug for the *camass*—the "queen of the wild root

family in the Creston country;" they gathered also other nutritious roots and wild fruits, such as wild rice, *caious* (a biscuit root), *wappato* (a bulbous, bitter root), haws, rose buds, and mountain cherries, which they dried into cakes. The men meanwhile resorted to the mountains for the hunt, to the quarries of red pipe stone, or to the natural paint pots along the Vermilion Pass where they converted by means of fire the liquid ochre into red oxide pigments for native trade purposes.

Daily life differed considerably east and west of the mountain ranges. The nomads of the flat lands to the east travelled in bands throughout the year, while their upland neighbours remained most of the time in small parties on hunting grounds that were parcelled out among the individual families of the various tribes. The wasteful habits and the spasmodic idleness of the prairie rovers, due to the abundance of the buffalo, could not prevail among the more virtuous mountain dwellers, whose interest it was to safeguard their more varied, but less easily procured, food staples.

Whatever their nation the Indians in those days had little to regret, little to desire. They roved at liberty as they pleased, on domains that extended as far as they could comfortably reach between sunrise

MRS. ALBIN
INDIAN NAME NOT KNOWN
KOOTENAY INDIAN WOMAN

and sunset. Their needs were few and easily satisfied. Giving little thought to the future, at least beyond the span of a year, they would rest as soon as their food stores were replenished and security assured. In a word they lived in the true golden age of simplicity and pristine innocence. True enough, there were seasons of scarcity and periods of abundance. A long and severe winter at times hampered the usual winter activities; the buffalo herds occasionally migrated far away; the salmon run failed once in every few years. Famine was not unknown, even in the early days. But these were only passing trials. Scarcity was not a man-killer, for native constitutions were hardy and elastic. The bounties of mother nature, when they returned, were only the sweeter, the more appreciated. Famished mouths feasted upon the first fruits of the new season with such excessive gusto as would have startled any white man unaccustomed to the "riddle of the Indian stomach," as Father De Smet termed it. After a period of starvation, not so long ago, a little band of Stonies surrounded a herd of goats near Mount Chancellor and shot down thirty-one heads. The feast that followed lasted three days and four nights, during which time the fires were blazing incessantly, the cooking pots never emptied and the gorging continued until

five of the hunters, stricken with fatal internal pains, lay down to rise no more. But no such mishap could have occurred under really primitive conditions when the natives depended on bows and arrows for the success of the hunt. Contrasts then made their naturally spasmodic and adventurous lives only the more enjoyable, the more thrilling. What more wonderful home could they have desired than this country so full of resources, so varied, so beautiful that it seemed like a Garden of Eden where no original sin had yet spoilt the charm of divine creation?

The era of independent native existence, however, could not last eternally, for instability is part of life itself. Its day was doomed from the time when the sailing ships of the white man were first sighted on the eastern fringe of the continent. A century or two was to accomplish the rest, but a century counts as nothing in the span of cosmic ages.

Soon after the landing of the strangers there broke out among the Indians the unknown scourges of smallpox, cholera and measles, reaping everywhere a heavy toll of lives. A smallpox epidemic visited the eastern Indians as early as the first part of the seventeenth century, and *The Jesuit Relations* describe its horrors among the Huron tribes of Ontario.

But no one at that date could have the faintest idea of the extent of its ravages among the yet undiscovered tribes of the west. When David Thompson, Father De Smet and other pioneers travelled across the mountains they heard of prehistoric plagues which had blotted out whole tribes.

To this day the Stonies and the Kootenays have preserved traditional recollections of that terrible calamity which significantly heralded the advent of the white man and the dawn of a new age. Here is the preamble of such a narrative recently recorded among the Stonies by Mr. Diamond Jenness.

"Long ago the Sioux chief, a medicine-man, predicted that if he ever died at the hand of man, all of his people would perish. One day he was killed in a feud. On the third day following, all the people in his tent died. Those in the nearest tent died the next day, everyone to the last. So the trouble went on, until the people broke camp and took to flight. Yet even as they fled they died one after another, a family at a time. In the end only one child was left, a boy of seven years, who fed from the breast of his dead mother for four days and four nights. A voice singing outside on the fourth night summoned him to leave the tent of the dead, for he would be spared, he would live to be an old man. So he wandered far

away, until he came upon a tent where an old man, his wife and their three sons lived together all by themselves. The old man adopted him as his fourth son, and from these four children by marriage with women of neighbouring tribes arose a large posterity —the several bands of the Sioux and Stonies of the western plains."

Somewhat similar is the legend which, according to Dr. Franz Boas, has survived among the Kootenays.

"I will tell the story of what happened long ago. The Kootenays were living together. Once they fell sick; sickness spread to everyone. They died, they all died, all but a very few. And it was everywhere the same. Those who were left travelled to tell the news, they travelled without finding anyone alive. At a village far away the Kootenays had died. The only one left was a man. He was alone. So he also decided to travel and look for people; "I must go all around the world," he said. Then he started in his canoe around the lakes. Now he landed at a camp of the Kootenays, their last camp. But there was nobody. As he went about he saw only dead ones, the bodies piled up inside the tents. No sign of any one living. He cried and went back to his canoe, thinking to himself, "I am the only one left in this country, for the dogs also are dead. . ."

In spite of these dark colours in the legends, however, it is clear that the diseases of the Europeans did not destroy the Indian nations altogether at their very first introduction. Neither did the remote mountaineers have any notions yet as to the impending revolution in their lives. To them the scourge did not come as a warning, as a foretaste of what was new, but from nowhere, or rather from unseen manitous angered by evil deeds, transgressions of some sacred taboos of old.

Not until long after did rumours arouse the attention of medicine-men and jugglers. Beeny and Gustlee, the rival seers who always remained as it were with their ears to the ground for tales of new wonders from abroad, could not fail to respond. They startled the mountain tribes far and near with the news of marvels quickly forthcoming from the world of ghosts and spirits. The advent of the white man was no ordinary occurrence to them, but a supernatural experience. No less. They could be nothing but manitous of a new kind, manitous such as were wont to appear in every-day life from time immemorial.

To Beeny their appearance in the land meant the golden age, a time when "dogs of the sky" would carry the red man's burdens, when new contrivances

would make life and the world more comfortable, and when sky beings would bring salvation to all who greeted them as messiahs. But Gustlee, as we have seen, entertained no such belief. The newcomers were not manitous, not friendly spirits, but only the Kannawdzets of the mountain tops, whose very sight killed the people.

The Indians were perplexed; they knew not whom to believe. But their choice soon went to Beeny, for it suits human nature best to yield to prophets whose omens are bright and hopeful. And yet who was right of the two? Beeny or Gustlee? Ask any of the present-day Indians of British Columbia who know the bitter truth. They will shrug their shoulders at Beeny, the simple fool of the Mild-people, who so blindly misconstrued his sky visions and opened the way for the ruin of his own kin.

We may wonder at this attitude of despair which undoubtedly prevails among the dusky wise men of the present day. Is there any justification for their gloomy outlook? Have they not simply met the disappointment that must inevitably follow false promises and the lure of an impossible utopia? It is only too easy for their reformers to answer such questions: Life has indeed been made "easier" for them since the introduction of the rifle, the steel axe and

the iron pot, not to speak of clothing, castile soap and a decent language! They used to idle away their existence in squalor and crass ignorance. Their idiom was a mere growl from the throat. Their tools were of stone and antler, and their artifacts, only fit for a bonfire. Their companions were the animals of the forest or the prairies. Their dwellings were huts and movable tents, where they froze in winter and starved between seasons. In a word they were uncivilized, they were savage men of the wilds with unaccountable ways of their own; they were heathens, the true wards of Satan, with no knowledge of God and his favourite son, the white man; they were not the descendants of Abel, but of Cain or perhaps of some later reprobate of yore, who knows!

But there is another side to the picture, a side which we usually ignore, but the very one which is uppermost in the red man's mind. Let us summarize it in a few pages instead of dwelling on it for days and weeks at a time as the Indians themselves do for their own misery.

Since the white man first appeared, epidemics have swept the country from time to time, killing the natives at a ratio that almost baffles imagination. Nations once twenty or thirty thousand strong have

dwindled to a few hundred, a mere handful even if we include the half-breeds. Now it is consumption that is decimating the ranks of the survivors.

Formerly the buffalo covered all the plains and even resorted to the forests across the mountains. Salmon so swarmed in all the rivers to the west of the mountains that the Indian could "cross the water" on their bodies. Trout and whitefish abounded in the lakes. Mountain sheep and goat, deer, moose and beaver were plentiful as well as everything that crawls, leaps or flies amid the trees of the forest. Now it is all different. The beaver has disappeared in most places through the use of castoreum—a bait that never fails; the females and the young ones have been exterminated by the free hunters. Game has become scarce everywhere; indeed it no longer exists wherever the white man can comfortably reach, except in the national parks. The native hunter used to husband the resources of his territory for future use just as carefully as a rancher does his cattle. But the casual sportsman who seldom visits the same spot twice cares not what happens on the morrow. He brings ruin, instant and irretrievable. The salmon run in the Columbia and Fraser rivers, if not yet totally checked, has dwindled almost to nothing, owing to the destructive inroads of the west coast canners at the estuaries.

CRESTFALLEN INDIANS

The roving herds of buffalo on the prairies are no more. Their disappearance, which has meant so much to the plains tribes, dates back to 1878-1880, when the troops of the American Government undertook to clear the prairies of all encumbrances—buffaloes and Indians alike. If a massacre of the Indians was not contemplated, as in the case of the Oregon and Washington campaigns in the thirties, it is because the day was past when so bare-faced a policy could be openly confessed. Opinion at home was divided; the murder of innocent Indians would leave a blot on the national escutcheon, and to provoke an insurrection might prove embarrassing. Why resort to antiquated methods when a subtle distinction was enough to save one's face and lead to the same practical results? Why not simply remove the food supply of the undesirables? And so it was done. No sooner had the buffalo vanished than the plains Indians, to their utter consternation found themselves face to face with starvation. The corner stone of their very lives had been taken away and no substitute could be discovered. Two winters of dire famine played havoc in their numbers; a band of Sioux actually fled across the border into Manitoba, to receive condolence rations from the Canadian Government. Following an outcry, a more humane policy of

artificial support was at last inaugurated. But from that day starvation has never ceased to stalk over many western reservations, where it has developed into a chronic disease that slowly but effectively smothers life.

About the time when their food supply was giving out, and their physique in consequence was slowly undermined, the Indians of the north-west underwent the most painful experience of the century, what to them meant no less than an exile. They were forced to renounce their territorial rights, to give up the hunting grounds they knew and loved so well, the lands where their forefathers had lived and were buried. In return they accepted paltry gifts from their conquerors, small reserves with treaty annuities; and in the case of the British Columbia tribes, reserves only and a forlorn hope of redress. With heavy hearts they had to acknowledge the inevitable and pass into comparative confinement, henceforth to find ample time to dream of their past glories and ponder over the future.

Some means had now to be provided to keep them from absolute starvation. The Stonies and the Kootenays, like the rest, were advised to go to school, to cultivate the land, raise cattle, seek day employment with their white neighbours and otherwise shift

for themselves. An existence traditionally nomadic is a poor farming instructor, especially when ill-fortune and discouragement linger constantly on the door-step; the old life had bred an unsteadiness which was fatal to success. Nursing "food out of sand and rocks" after the manner of the white man still seems too tedious to the Indian used to the thrills of the buffalo hunt, to the arduous chase of the wild goat on the mountain sides, or to the bounties of the salmon run. Yet, real progress towards adaptation is to be noticed in more than one place. Weaning the red man out of his inveterate habit of "mushing the trails" has become a settled policy, and the aid of the mounted police has been more than once invoked. It must be discouraging for government inspectors, however, to find so many ploughs rusting in unfinished furrows, and improved machinery, bought with treaty money, going to waste in untilled fields.

* * *

If the red man of America were only an animal, devoid of speech, inherited memories and high emotional and reasoning powers, the Indian problem would be much simplified for social reformers, instructors, gaolers, et al. He might be gently chloroformed or preserved in a zoological garden; or he might even prosper on a reserve as well as the buffalo

in the national parks of Canada. But the blessing of humanity—also its curse at times—is reason and memory. Human society does not subsist on bread alone; the secret of its permanency lies in its ethics. Social discipline and taboos, usually the result of a long unifying tradition, are essential; else something goes wrong with the complex fabric and collapse is inevitable. No race on earth has ever thrived in defiance of custom, morality and a deep-felt interest in existence. So with the Indian; so with our present friends the Stonies of the foothills and the Kootenays of the mountains.

When still undisturbed these natives had elaborate customs of their own. Marriage was strictly regulated, license almost unknown. The children, loved by their parents, underwent systematic training in a way that fitted them for the pursuits of later life. Honesty, generosity and truthfulness were the rule. Bravery was associated with gentleness. Native indifference to uncleanliness and evil smells did not preclude health and endurance. If thievishness prevailed among the prairie tribes in their dealings with the white men, it was excused on the ground that the strangers themselves were only cheats. The mountain dwellers were far more scrupulous in this respect, and their reliability was proverbial. Authority was

SUSETTE
INDIAN NAME NOT KNOWN
KOOTENAY INDIAN WOMAN

paternal and friendly; it rested in the hands of the parents, the elders and the wise men gathered in council. Peace in intertribal trade and intercourse was based upon mutual respect, goodwill and the acknowledgment of territorial rights. It came to an end only at the time when firearms ushered in the fatal period of transgressions and opened the door to endless evils, to the ultimate doom of the race.

Now, after more than a century of association with a "superior" race, matters have taken a different turn. The ancient customs have disappeared one by one, imperceptibly. The golden thread of tradition has been dropped long ago. Marriage in the pagan style was condemned as unworthy by the early educators and missionaries. The seclusion of girls before puberty and premature betrothal were branded as barbaric. A church ceremony, following a semi-promiscuous education, was substituted, though in itself it considerably weakened the sexual taboos. Now, after years of gradual transition, church weddings themselves are going out of fashion on many reserves. There can be no thought of reviving the old system, for what is dead cannot be resurrected. Some of the government agents are attempting to restore order out of chaos, but their efforts, on the whole, remain fruitless. The marital bond, when it

snaps, is not one that can be welded by a blacksmith or mended as the housewife mends her yarn. It belongs to the mind or the heart, and cannot hold firm when morality has strayed away from its sign-posts after a confusing change of orientation. Free unions, lasting for a moon or a year, are now coming to the fore, or facile promiscuity as soon as all signs of restraint have faded away. If this social phenomenon is worth the notice of theorists and eugenists, let them wait for a few years and behold the result. At present the indications point convincingly to the speedy extinction of the race.

Marriage once abolished, parental duties are inevitably neglected and education even of the most elementary kind is placed in jeopardy, in spite of Government schools, which at best can enlist only a small minority of Indians. But why is it that no substitutes are found—for instance the authority of family chiefs or of tribal councils?

The truth is there are no longer any regular chiefs, and tribal councils are institutions of the past. Indian youth, like our own, is unruly. It knows too much, or else too little, to submit to age and experience alone, for it has grown impatient of training and control.

Civil authority in the hands of the elders was firm and generous in the old days; it was wholesome, to

quote the term of Father De Smet. It presided over the various phases of daily life. Why then should it have been allowed to disappear among the western tribes? We see no reason for it, if it has not actually been denied a right to subsist. The missionaries and government agents had come there to stay, to establish the new rule, the new standards of existence. The resistance they often encountered on the part of conservative old chiefs was resented, denounced as heathenish and noxious. It could not be tolerated. As the newcomers had the upper hand, they succeeded in casting discredit on the old "pagan" leaders and soon established themselves as the only masters. On some reserves—as in the Kootenay country, for instance—the new authority has upheld its prestige and effectively retained the reins of power for the good of their wards. But this is not the case, unfortunately, in most places. Many posts have been vacated altogether, or else, strong personalities have given way to perfunctory successors. The influence of the missionaries has been decidedly on the wane in recent years, owing principally to the legal suppression of the *potlatch* festivities and other political agitations. The government agents have not felt competent as a rule to take the lead, or do more than dole out relief and annuities or more frequently call

in the police and prosecute delinquents. At the present day the sole vestige of authority is the white man's law sitting conveniently far away out of sight and usually also out of mind.

* * *

Deprived of his former hunting ground and food supply, the Indian might still become an agriculturist. Denied the moral comfort of his ancient customs and government, he might still stand up and look for a ray of hope in the sky. He is by no means devoid of physical strength, ability and endurance. His sagacity and shrewdness have always been proverbial. It seems only natural that he should desire to adapt himself to modern conditions, for the preservation of his race. Why then does he remain sullen, discontented, nursing antiquated griefs, voluntarily stooping as it were over the edge of an open grave? Why does he not feel impelled to fight his way defiantly through life, dull and humiliating though it may be, as so many white men have done in the forlorn wastes of the new world?

The problem now resolves itself into one of mob psychology pure and simple. It involves fundamentally the spiritual fibre and stamina of the race. There is no doubt that the Indian mind has now lost

its bearings on a starless sea. The ancient beliefs, notions and myths have been shaken to their roots; the ancestral cosmogony has fallen to the ground and the path to salvation can be found by no one, whether seer or sorcerer, wise man or fool.

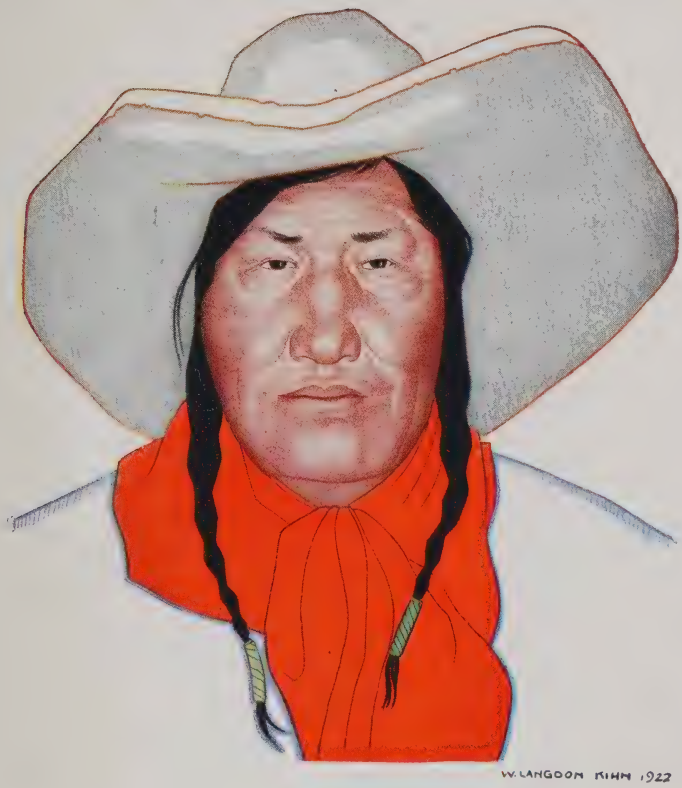
We have offered the red man our religion, our philosophy, our ethics, even our prejudices in exchange for his own. Being a "superior" race we can assure him of the veracity of our creeds. Through our missionaries we have taken more pains to implant our dogmas in his brain than to teach him our manual arts or practical industries. But have we succeeded in converting him to our views? For one who has read the early historical records of the west and consulted the present-day Indians, it is not easy to escape the conclusion that the doctrines of Christianity have not penetrated very deeply into the native mentality. Obstacles in the way of real achievement were, indeed, far greater than was generally anticipated.

Vivid religious notions had been firmly implanted in the land from the remote past. These could not be abolished in a day simply by the good will of a few pious men, particularly since these latter day apostles, not being blessed with the gift of languages, spoke an idiom unknown to the many tribes allotted

to their keeping throughout a more or less inaccessible country. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that even the church-going natives of the present-day have retained many of the ancient beliefs of their forefathers. If "heathenish" practices have on the whole been suppressed, at least within sight of the mission houses, it is more as a mark of outward submission to authority than an authentic surrender of the treasure-house of old "paganism."

And how could it be otherwise? Our creeds are largely expressed in terms of Judæo-Roman philosophy; their background is that of Babylonian and Mediterranean civilization; they have no direct reference to the only things which the Indians knew so well—the plains, the mountains and their own selves, Stonies and Kootenays. The American races, on the other hand, built their native religion upon the experiences of their daily existence. The faiths of the old and the new world stood far apart. One was lofty and abstract, the other concrete and matter of fact. They were removed from one another as are the poles from the equator.

When the late Tetlaneetsa, a life-long Christian and a most sympathetic chief of the Thompson River Indians, was reminded a few years ago that Jesus had fasted forty days in the desert, he approvingly



GEORGE McCLEAN
WALKING BUFFALOE OR TATANKA-MANI
STONY INDIAN

answered, "Yes, yes, he did. I know it! I myself fasted only twenty days before my *snams* (guardian spirits), the Twin-She-Bears, appeared to me in a vision, when I was a young man. Jesus fasted forty days, so he did, and he got his medicine too—good medicine, eh!"

The naive mixture of incompatible religious notions among the Indians has impressed many observers, missionaries and laymen alike. Sir George Simpson, for instance, noticed that wooden crosses had been placed at the head of each grave in a Pend'Oreilles cemetery, just south of the Kootenay frontiers, sometime before the forties. These crosses, he says, "are the result of a recent visit of some Catholic priests. But as a practical illustration of the value of such conversions, we found on a neighbouring tree a number of offerings to one of the (recently) departed spirits and a basket of provisions for its voyage to the next world. If the Indians had a definite idea at all of the cross they put it merely on the same footing as their other medicines and charms."

The enmity between the nations east and west of the Rocky Mountains was so deadly that it could not be blotted out, even among those who vowed obedience to the Jesuit Fathers. A Pend'Oreilles

convert, Peter, was called a saint and a true apostle by one of the early missionaries. Yet he seems not to have endeavoured to reconcile his racial hatred against his enemies with the amenities of his new creed. A Blackfoot warrior was captured and wounded whilst in the act of stealing a horse at night. His wound rendered him furious. He held his loaded gun and threatened death to any one who dared approach him. Peter, though he was advanced in years and diminutive in size, felt his courage revive at this challenge, and running up to his enemy he stretched him dead upon the ground with a blow from his tomahawk. This done he kneeled down, so Father De Smet relates, and raising his eyes towards Heaven, he prayed, "Great Spirit! Thou knowest that I did not kill this Blackfoot from a desire of revenge, but because I was forced to it. Be merciful to him in the other world . . . ."

When the early missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, first appeared in the north-western expanses, they were naturally welcomed by the natives as the white man's sorcerers and medicine-men. Powerful must be their art, since they belonged to a people whose resources so far excelled their own; startling must be their magical gifts, and overpowering their manitous. It was the newcomers' unique oppor-

tunity—their new flock was in a fruitful attitude of expectancy and credulity. The soil was ready for their labours.

Only the old-fashioned sorcerers, seers and jugglers whose prerogatives had thus been transgressed stood aside. They deeply resented the loss of their prestige. Though inclined at first to yield to the novel creeds, they soon rallied, thereafter to become the stubborn rivals of the Black-robes and Gospel preachers wherever they set foot.

Not many years of intimacy were required to remove the early native preconceptions as to the supernatural abilities of the white medicine-men. The new rituals, in failing to achieve anything but spiritual results, definitely passed out of the domain of awe-inspiring witchcraft into that of social entertainment pure and simple. The Catholic chapels, where the religious services were more spectacular and the outward manifestations of worship more striking than in the Protestant, offered a stronger appeal to the visual imaginations of the great majority of the worshippers. Some of the early missionaries managed to maintain their foothold, in spite of the disillusionment of their neophytes. But their success was mainly due to adroit and persistent efforts and to striking virtues that endeared them in a personal way to their flock.

No sooner did the medicine-men notice the backward drift of native opinion than they cleverly endeavoured to recover their former place in the esteem of their compatriots; and to the bitter disappointment of apostolic souls, many one-time converts disowned their solemn pledges and returned to the more congenial "heathenism" of their birth.

A noted sorcerer among the Western Crees—"an adroit impostor who has been baptized," as Father De Smet terms him—once had a vision of the white man's Heaven, which thoroughly convinced him that it was far too exclusive a Kingdom for the dusky people of the prairies and the mountains. The news of his revelation, after travelling abroad and becoming a formal tradition, is said to have greatly impeded the progress of missionary labours among many of the western nations. The tradition was first reported by Father De Smet and Paul Kane in their memoirs.

"After I was baptized, I fell sick, I died," related the medicine-man at the time of his presumed resurrection. "Dead, I was taken to the white man's Heaven in the sky, as I had been very good. All the dead friends and relatives of our preachers assembled there were happy, very happy. They had everything the white man loves and wishes for, everything. And

the country was fine, beautiful. But all was strange to me. No fishing, no hunting, no dancing. I could see none of the spirits of my ancestors. No one was there to meet me, to welcome me. I felt lonely, I felt sad. The Great Manitou called and asked, "Why are you so sad in this beautiful heaven which I have made for you?"—"Because I am lonely and sorrowful," I replied, "I can see here none of my relatives." The Great Manitou of the white people was very kind to me. He allowed me to leave his Heaven if I wished to, on account of my red skin. Then I went to the happy hunting grounds of my ancestors, where they refused to receive me. I was baptized, that is why. The only thing for me to do was to come back here to my tribe, renounce my baptism and return to my medicine bag. The old-time ways are the only ones that can make us worthy of the wonderful plains in spirit-land, where numberless herds of buffalo roam day and night for the everlasting happiness of Indian souls."

The calling of medicine men has always been well represented among the prairie and Rocky Mountain tribes of Canada. The duties of this privileged class consisted in dealing with the mysterious and supernatural agencies as they were understood from time immemorial, agencies that encompassed the

undivided fields of primitive science and religion combined.

It was not enough for the Indian mind to be confronted with the cosmic phenomena, overwhelming as they are; but a host of demons, ghosts and spirits pervading everywhere were also conjured into existence, as if further to baffle the understanding. Visions and marvels occurred day and night, and no effort was made to fathom their inner meaning. Seers and sorcerers held undisputed sway over credulous followers. Amulets and incantations were the only instruments deemed fit to operate not only in the world of living but more frequently in that of the shadows beyond.

Spirits were said to dwell in most objects under the sun, in trees, rivers, mountain tops and animals. *Manitous* they were called by the eastern Algonkins and *snams* among the Salish of the plateaus. Their mystic powers were sought by men and women alike, and by none more emphatically than medicine-men and seers.

To secure the help of these spiritual benefactors one had to undergo a prolonged training during adolescence. The longer the training the greater the powers that might be derived, both actual and mystic. Fasts and seclusions in the wilderness

ultimately brought about the long-desired apparitions of the manitous to their protégés; and these visions were held to insure welfare and success throughout the whole span of life. While the ordinary hunter and warrior could boast of no more than one humble manitou during his lifetime, the sorcerer, on the other hand, strove to enlist to his support as many of the most powerful spirits as he could secure. With their assistance he would cast spells to injure his enemies, drive away diseases, command the elements and even foretell the future. "In the wretched condition of the savage tribes along the Columbia," says Father De Smet (one of the early missionaries), "there is one redeeming feature—a constant desire to discover some power superior to man. This disposition renders them attentive to the least word that conveys knowledge of a Supreme Being. Hence the facility with which they believe anything that is at all akin to the Word of God."

When a "shaman" was called to practise his art over a patient, he resorted to means that resembled more the rituals of priesthood than the prosaic ways of our medical professions. He put on his skin robe and magic amulets. He beat his drum and sang incantations to reach into the invisible spheres. In his growing religious exaltation he uttered supplica-

tions and magic spells, and when the trance was complete he ceased to be himself but impersonated the spirit which he had conjured forth to his assistance.

"Very well, very well, child, I will sing for thee!" —thus began a medicine-man of chief Kinbasket's tribe, near Lake Windermere. "I will sing to the Lizard, the great one of the mountains. I will sing to the many Lizards, his sons and daughters. Let them roll along the mountain slopes, let them come down the steep hill-sides. As they glide down, the trees are crushed to dust, the snow turns into water and the rocks are pulverized into grains of sand. Child, look at him coming, the great Lizard. He is followed by his children every one. Now they sit in a ring at the bottom, and the bands around their heads have come undone. The bands are blown upwards by the wind from the canyon. Child, look and look with me! The bands are like rainbows in the air. What wonderful rainbows! They stand up on earth and reach up into the sky. The rainbows are verily their breaths, the breaths of the Lizards from the mountain tops, and this is what they sing, 'Child, the breath of our mouths are rainbows. The power of rainbows is what saves our health. We are never, never sick. Look at us, look at the rainbows, child, and you will be well again."

Another medicine-man of the same nation used to sing this song, which he named *utiltcheenam:* "O my grand-child, in what pitiful state do I find thee! I will examine thee, I will. Thou art sick. What has happened? Perhaps the water has hurt thee, the evil spirits in the water; perhaps the earth has hurt thee, the evil spirits of the upper world? Very well, very well, grand-child. I will now examine thee; I must find out. The Eel, my manitou, the Eel, thy grandfather, will come and help us search the waters and the earth. It lives in the big eddy. The great bird *Spedzo* will soar above, all through the air and the clouds. And I shall find out, grand-child, I shall find out."

The native treatments for disease were not invariably confined to incantations. Potions from barks and roots served many a useful or fancied purpose. Sweat-baths in small circular huts where water was poured over red-hot stones, also constituted a favourite cure. But even here the benevolent spirit of the sweat-house, *Kwilsten,* had to be earnestly propitiated. "O you my grandfather," they would pray, "you open-faced Kwilsten, you will heal me. I am poor, I am sick, always, always. You will cure my poverty, my sickness. When it is drawn out of my body, may my sickness depart upward even as the

steam from these hot stones. Upward goes the steam and upward goes my sickness. Make my body firm and good like yours, O grand-father Kwilsten, you who live far away yet near, who have always been the same from the beginning of things. Have pity on me, O truly! I am miserable. Make my grandchildren all love me, respect me as a chief, a leader. May they always bless me, Kwilsten, you my own grand-father! Thus I have spoken to you, *halelelelele!*"

The sorcerers in their efforts were often carried beyond the frontiers of spirit land. The awe-inspiring sacredness of their activities impressed them quite as intensely as it did their followers. The impetus of tradition so permeated the social fabric that every newcomer in the secret art could not help being swept along on the crest of the mystic wave. Make-belief assumed the features of authenticity, and presumptions had the force of reality. The future and the past lay exposed within the grasp of the inspired seer, and spirits appeared wherever fancy prompted, even in broad daylight. No one questioned the truth of it all, for it had been accepted from time immemorial all over the land.

It is evident, however, that the practice of the mystic art was apt to degenerate into deceit and

jugglery pure and simple. Ambitious men would go into the woods to commune with spirits, and instead of confessing failure whenever it was experienced they would sometimes boast of success. But they became objects of derision as soon as their duplicity was exposed. Deceitful exploitation for selfish purposes not only brought discredit upon medicine-men, but actually endangered their lives, if they could not stave off impulses for retaliation.

The Stony usurper Tchatka was fond of resorting to tricks in order to enhance his own prestige. Others would have emulated him, had they not feared speedy retribution. Sir George Simpson quotes the instance of a medicine-man, in a Columbia River tribe, who had cast an evil spell on a fine horse which he coveted. Henceforward all of its owner's horses would have sore and inflamed feet. But the owner, named Peechee, was watchful; he suspected foul play, and as soon as he "found the knave hammering away with a stone at the hoofs of his horses he very quietly sent a bullet through his head."

* * *

The younger generation of the Kootenays, Salish and Stonies have no longer a vital interest in the ancient beliefs; they have grown indifferent to the faith in personal guardian spirits—manitous or

snams—which meant so much to their ancestors and indeed contributed to maintain the spiritual stamina of not a few of the present-day elders. It is this abandonment of their faith more than anything else that accounts for the wholesale moral decay of the race and its vacuous attitude towards life. Doctrines good or bad serve a purpose; even illusions are useful, for they unify social forces and prevent disintegration.

If a young man is lazy, incapable, sickly and untrustworthy, you will hear some wise old man remark deprecatingly, "We know why! It cannot be otherwise: he has had no training, the poor wretch; he has never fasted in the woods; he has never seen a *snam* in his dreams." If his meaning is not sufficiently clear to you, he will explain, "One who has no *snam* gets no help in time of need, in time of danger. Without guardian spirits an Indian is like a fish without fins. He cannot live very long; he is nothing but a fool. For it is through them that we really know the sun, the moon, the mountains, the dawn and the night; it is from them that we get the strength of earth, of all nature."

How emphatically this wholesome creed has survived to our time in at least a few cases may be surmised from the late Tetlaneetsa's sincere and vivid account of his own *snam* experiences:

GEORGE KAKUITTS
WOLF-TEETH OR SUNKTOHCA-ISKA
STONY INDIAN

"At fifteen years of age, I was up in the hills, undergoing training, all alone, all alone.

One summer night I slept in an open field, in the grass, near a patch of fireweeds. A great wind rose at dawn and I heard a voice, a sweet voice, floating above, floating back and forth with the tufts of cotton from the fireweed stalks. "Dear son, listen to me, listen to this song!" I opened my eyes, but could see no one. It was only a dream—a *sekwalawh*. As I woke up slowly, again I heard the voice in the wind; it grew clearer to my ears. It was a voice with many tones, as if many people were singing together, singing very softly at dawn.

Now I understood the words of my old god-father, "When you wake up at daybreak, you will hear the voice of the wind, the song of all nature. Listen to it, son, for it is a lesson to you." And I listened to the wind, the strong wind from the valleys below. It swept the grass, the fireweeds, the bushes, swept the trees, the trees large and small, the trees with leaves or with needles. It was the voice of the wind that makes all nature sing, the rivers, the canyons, the mountain gorges, the forests. I could hear them all singing in the wind. Their song was beautiful, endless, dream-like.

I woke and sat up. Oh, the strong wind, the wind

that blew up the mountain slope! The grass, the fireweeds, the trees, the canyons were all singing together a mighty song. I learnt the tune and began to hum it to myself. I picked up my hat and used it as a drum. It was impossible to sit still, for the song floated all about in the air, and every one must dance when the trees and the brush and the grass dance in the wind.

Then what did I see? Two women, two young women, sisters, coming from the east. They were not walking; their feet only swept the weeds as they drifted in the wind. They sang the song of nature as they came, picking flowers, grass and leaves all the way. One of them picked an aspen twig and passed it on to her sister, who threw it away. The other picked an aspen twig and handed it to her sister, who also threw it away. And they went on picking up aspen twigs and throwing them away, singing all the while.

Now they were near; now they stood next to me. It was like a dream of night, yet like a vision in daylight. The elder sister had vermilion spots painted on her cheeks and the younger red spots on her breasts. And the red spots seemed like flowers raised above the flesh, though they were the scars of healed wounds. I could no longer sing, I fell pros-

trate. They stooped over me, brushing my head and my shoulders with their soft, wind-like, leaf-like hands. Now the elder sister said to me, "Look at us, brother! You see these wounds of ours, you see them in our flesh?"—"Yes, sisters, I do!"—"These wounds came to us when we were shot, shot at in death. But we did not die; we are still alive. We could not die, because this is our song, the song of the wind; because we pass on the flowers and the twigs to one another, the flowers and leaves of earth, as we walk along. Have you seen us coming, brother, have you heard us singing, friend?"—"Sisters, I have seen you coming, I have heard your song as you came in the wind."—"Brother, listen! If you sing our song, if you dance to its tune, perhaps it may also come to you, the power that we possess. When a bullet pierces your flesh, paint vermilion on the wound as we have done, and you shall become well again. Sing our song, brother, for it will make you feel strong as the weeds, strong as the trees, strong as we are."

Then they shook me, saying, "Wake up, friend! The day has dawned; listen to the warbling of the birds!" When I looked up, they had turned back with the wind; they were drifting away like two white clouds above the long prairie that stretched upwards in the direction of sunrise. Their limbs

were so white, so radiant that they left a glittering trace in the wind behind them. It was like white dust from their feet in the distance. At the eastern edge of the prairie they came to a basin surrounded by a spruce forest. A violent snow drift swept down from the timber and covered their shining wake. "Brother," they said, turning to me, "our enemies cannot pursue us. They have lost our tracks. They who shot and wounded us cannot do any harm, for we sing the song of all nature." Before disappearing they threw their song into the mouth of Salalaw, the diver, who repeated it while they changed into female black bears. Then I knew who they were—the female Twin-bears, my own *snam,* my guardian spirits. I strove to walk after them, towards the spruce forest. But I could no longer see them; for they disappeared in the twilight, in the shadows cast by the sun as it rose in the sky, after daybreak.

Many times in the following years I had other visions of the Twin-bears, and whenever they appeared to me, after a fast in the mountains, it was for my own good, my own welfare.

It was winter time, about fifteen years later. I fell sick at my winter camp. For three weeks I lay ill and became thin and very weak. It seemed as though I would soon die. As I was asleep one morn-

ing, I heard a song in my dream, a song that issued from the lake shore. The wind moaned among the trees and the waves broke on the beach. The song was almost lost in the noise of the wind and the waves. But still it continued, it grew more distinct, and drowned all the other sounds. I wondered where it came from. Opening my eyes I saw many bears, and the bears were singing the song. Their tune was so irresistible that I could not help singing it too. I woke up, but instead of bears I saw only large stones, the stones along the beach. Looking again, I did not see the stones but only the flat beach where the waves were breaking one by one, and the trees near-by, the trees that were swaying in the wind. "Let me reach the one I love;" this was the song that rocked me to sleep again. And as I slept I beheld a vision: just next to me stood my *snam,* the elder of the two sisters, she whose cheeks were painted with vermilion. She said, "Brother, you are almost dead, you are far gone!"—"Yes," I replied, "I am far gone." My *snam* kept looking at me for a while, she who had appeared at the place where the sun rises. Speaking once more, she said, "Eat the soakberry;" and she vanished like a mist, all at once. I awoke, and called my wife, my wife and the other people in the camp. "What is it?" they asked. "I had a *sekwalawh,* a

dream," I answered; "I wonder if you could find soakberries for me." It was winter time and berries were difficult to find. But the people went out and looked everywhere for the berries. For a long time they searched and at last they found a handful of dried soakberries on a bush, seven miles away, at another camp. They galloped back with them on horseback, and, soaking them in water, beat them up into a froth with a *sopolally* stick. I ate the froth, just a spoonful, and the next day I sat up, I stood up, I felt well, very well as usual. My wife and all my relatives looked at me; they were glad. "You see that my *snam* has not forgotten me. She still loves me and helps me."

Then followed a gap of eight years, eight full years without a single glimpse of my *snam*—the snams are forsaking us everywhere now; they are leaving the country. I was working on a Government trail, working with pick and shovel. As I slept there at night I had a dream. An old man appeared to me, all clad in white, in a long white robe like that of a priest. Around his waist was tied a white woven belt. When he appeared his song was that of the Twin-bear sisters, my former snams. "Do you recognize it?" he enquired. But there was no spirit voice in me; I could not reply. "Have you heard of me be-

fore?" he asked. "Grand-son, if you don't sing this song at noon to-morrow you shall die." Now I began to sing my dream song, sing it aloud in my sleep. I was still singing when I awoke, and the old man seemed to be standing near me, singing likewise. My wife said, "What has happened? What have you seen?" I replied, "At noon to-morrow I shall die if I do not sing my song. I have seen Old Man." My wife joined in the song with me, and as soon as she began to sing Old Man moved towards the creek, Siwash Creek, about a hundred yards away. When only half way there he turned around, opened the flap of his long white robe and said, "Do you see my dress?" I looked at his dress, which was white as snow; but it was only his own white hair, long, long hair flowing down all around his body, with one braid twisted like a belt around his waist. Then Old Man sang his song, "Since the world first grew have I been. You see my hair, my snow-white hair? You see how old I am, as old as the rivers, as old as the mountains? Yet I remain what I am, strong as ever. The snams of the grass, the snams of fireweed, of all other weeds are in me; the snams of trees, the snams of the lakes and the mountains; the snams of all nature are mine. From them, from all nature I am strong, old though I am."

Old Man turned again towards Siwash Creek, walking slowly and singing as he went. At the edge of the creek he looked at me once more, then stepped into the water, up to his ankles, up to his knees. In midstream he began to sink slowly, very slowly. When the water reached his head, a thick layer of white hair spread over the surface, like bubbling foam; and the song "Since the world first grew" rose softly from under the stream, from the water running down the cascade, from above, from below, from the trees all around. It was as in a dream, a dream changed into a vision.

Then my soul departed from my body; it went towards Siwash Creek, and past the creek to the deep ravine three miles beyond, where two tall trees stood at the edge of a cliff. Beneath these trees were bushes. This was the place where death might come to me the next day. My soul hovered all about the trees and the bushes for a long while. Now the tracks of two bears were visible on the soft ground. I seemed to follow them away from the trees and the cliff, though it was only my soul that tracked the bears up the steep slope. As I was still sitting and singing in the camp with my wife, someone spoke and shouted outside. Two Indians were dwelling in a tent beside me, and nearby was another tent full of

white men, white labourers. It was the white men who opened the tent flaps, crying, "What's the matter, Jim, old boy? It's past midnight. Are you crazy?"—"No, I am not," I replied, "I have had a dream, and if I do not sing now, sing with all my power, at noon to-morrow I shall die." The white men began to laugh—they did not believe in dreams, in guardian spirits.

But I kept on singing as best I could, singing all through the night until dawn. Meanwhile my soul followed the tracks up a rock slide to a deep hole, the den of the bears themselves. My Twin-bear snams now joined in the song of my soul, the song I also sang in my cabin with my wife, the song of weeds, of grass, of the trees, and of rivers, the song of all nature, that makes one share in the strength of all the snams on earth, in the water and in the air.

In the morning I ceased singing and went out with my pick and shovel as usual. With three Indians and many other workmen I walked past Siwash Creek to the deep ravine three miles away where stood the two tall trees on the edge of the cliff. Unknown to us all a large tree trunk was lying on its side above our heads as we passed below a steep incline. All at once an Indian shouted, "Look out!" The tree trunk was sliding down the hill side. I was

caught by the tree and carried a hundred feet below, like a bullet, between the trunk and another large log resting at the bottom near the water's edge. The people shouted, "He is dead!" But I was not dead, only half asleep and half awake, as in a dream. My song was still singing inside of me, the song of strength, the song of life. I could hardly breathe; I was choking.

The men chopped the tree trunk away and removed me from a hollow the size of my body between two large limbs. I was not dead, only fainting. "Are you still alive?" they asked me. I nodded; I was too weak to speak. But my song was still in me. After a while I could stand up and walk. For many days I stayed in camp, very weak, but I never ceased to sing the Twin-bear song in my heart, the song that had saved my life.

"Oh, my sisters, my sisters of the glowing dawn, can you hear me, can you hear my song? Perhaps you are gone forever, perhaps you are travelling far away to the east. You may be here, you may be there. Here or there, alas! But now I can see the sun near the gate of sunrise, I can hear a voice, the voice of the great wind along the mountain crags. How strong, how mighty the voice of the wind! And these are the words of his song, while the grass, the

bushes, the fireweeds and the trees are swaying, 'Dear son, listen to me, listen to my song?' I open my eyes, but I cannot see you yet, Twin-sisters of sunrise, I cannot see your glittering trail in the wind, the dust of your feet in the distance. Oh, when is it that I shall hear you again singing the song of all nature, see you again drifting in the wind, picking flowers and grass and leaves as you move along? Oh, when is it? Dawn is near, the wind is strong, and I am here, sisters, waiting for a glimpse of you, a word of you, the word that alone can save my life."

So did Tetlaneetsa end the narrative of his visions, the ancient manitou visions that are passing away with the older generation of Indians.

MARY ALICE McLEAN
OTTER WOMAN OR ITABYA-WIYA
STONY INDIAN GIRL

Addenda

Addenda

ETHNOLOGICAL NOTES

THE fact that the natives dwelling about the Rocky Mountains belong to several linguistic stocks and races was not fully realized by the early observers. It is in the course of the last forty years that ethnographers and linguists have unravelled some of the knotty problems of their history. It is now accepted that they belong to several unrelated languages. These are: the Siouan and the Algonkin, east of the mountains; the Kootenay and the Salish, on the south-eastern plateaus of British Columbia; and the Athapaskan or Déné, in the north.

THE ASSINIBOINE OR STONIES

The only distinctly Canadian representatives of the widespread Siouan languages, formerly spoken over a vast area in the central and eastern United States, are the Assiniboine or Stony Indians, who belong to the Dakota branch of the Siouan stock. After their

separation from their kinsmen, at the headquarters of the Mississippi, they are believed to have settled between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay (in 1658), and thence to have moved to the neighbourhood of Lake Winnipeg. The early explorers noted that their country extended from the Red River to the junction of the North and South Saskatchewan; and their bands roamed over Manitoba and the southern parts of Assiniboia and Alberta. Owing partly to the preponderance of the Blackfoot, who were among the first to get firearms from the whites, the Assiniboine gradually moved towards the mountains. The region extending between the Rocky Mountains and the Jasper Forest parks became the hunting grounds of the "Mountain Stonies." The government has now placed them on many reserves, widely scattered on the prairies and the foothills. The best known of their reserves is that of Morley, on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, about half way between Banff and Calgary. Those of the Edmonton Agency are situated on the Ste. Anne and Wabamun lakes, west of Edmonton. Their population was estimated by Alexander Henry, about 1800, at ten thousand souls. Only two thousand five hundred are now left, about one thousand four hundred of whom live in Canada.

ADDENDA

THE ALGONKIN

The Blackfoot and the Plains Cree, two independent Algonkin people, speaking widely different dialects, formerly occupied immense territories on the plains, east of the Rocky Mountains.

The BLACKFOOT, a powerful and warlike nation, were the Bedouins of the Plains. Their already decreasing population, about 1858, was estimated at seven thousand three hundred souls. The vast country extending from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains, and from the sources of the Missouri to the Saskatchewan river, was their former home. Their three subdivisions, consisting of the Blackfoot proper (or Siksika), the Blood, and the Piegan, are often erroneously stated to have formed a confederacy. They merely considered themselves as of one family, the three branches of which descended from three brothers. Their war and hunting parties used to roam over the prairies, and they were dreaded by their many enemies. A tradition has it that they originally came from Lake Winnipeg, while others indicate that they migrated from the north or the southwest. There is no doubt that, in remote times, they originated in the east, the home of the Algonkins, and that they displaced many tribes on

the plains, compelling them to withdraw in various directions. The traditional feuds resulting from such encroachments lasted centuries and have never been forgotten. In their wars against the Cree and the Assiniboine, the Blackfoot joined forces with the Sarsi, an Athabaskan tribe from the north, to whom they extended their protection. Their much reduced population—about four thousand six hundred—is now confined to a few reserves in Alberta and Montana. By a treaty with the government, in 1878, the Blackfoot and Assiniboine yielded the whole country from Lake Winnipeg to the mountains. They were granted two reserves in Alberta. After some readjustments, the present régime was established. The reserve of the Blackfoot proper is now situated at Gleichen, about 50 miles east of Calgary, on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Two other Blackfoot (i.e. Blood and Piegan) reserves are those of the neighbourhood of Waterton Lake Park, in the south-west corner of Alberta. Near Macleod, on Oldman river, the Blood have the largest reserve in the Dominion. The Piegans have their lands at Brocket, on the Crow's Nest Pass Railway.

The PLAINS or WESTERN CREE, together with their kinsmen, the Swampy or Woods Cree and the Eastern Cree, until lately held more territory in

America than any other Indian nation. Their country extended from Hudson Bay and Athabasca Lake to the Rocky Mountains. Spreading westward, they invaded the domains of the Blackfoot and Athabascan nations. Bitter enmity ensued between the Cree and the Blackfoot, and the early explorers often encountered their contending war parties. Although the Cree were the indirect cause of their troubles, the Assiniboine (Stony) sought their friendship and long ago became most intimately connected with them, to fight their common enemy, the Blockfoot. The total Cree population is now reduced to approximately fifteen thousand. The westernmost reserves of the Plains Cree are those of the Hobbema and Edmonton Agencies, situated, the first, half way between Calgary and Edmonton, the second, a few miles west and north of Edmonton.

THE KOOTENAY

The Kootenay stock, consisting of the Upper and Lower Kootenay, claims the southeast corner of British Columbia and a part of northern Washington as its own. These tribes originally seem to have dwelt east of the Rocky Mountains, possibly in Montana, and they have to this day retained many characteristics acquired in their former habitat, the plains.

A century ago they lived as much on the eastern slope of the mountains as on the other; they used to trade horses with the Stony-Assiniboine, and to hunt the buffalo. Although expelled by the Blackfoot from the home of their ancestors, they now seem to have forgotten their long standing quarrels, and, as their close neighbours, they now live on friendly terms with them. Four or five hundred of their kinsmen still reside in Idaho and Montana.

The Waterton Lake Park (Alberta) is on the eastern frontier of the Lower Kootenay tribe. The Yoho and Glacier parks are almost entirely situated in the domains of the Upper Kootenay. Their population in Canada slightly exceeds five hundred. It is not many years since they have been placed on four reserves, with headquarters at Steele, B.C.

THE SALISH

Most of southern British Columbia and the northern part of Washington have for an indefinite time been the home of the Salish. The well-known custom of flattening or artificially deforming the head as an indication of high standing in society was enforced only among the coast tribes, the culture of which was quite different in type from that of their plateau kinsmen. In the vicinity of the Canadian National

Parks, the Salish are represented by the Shuswap, the Thompson River or Ntlakapamuh, and the Okanagan. The largest of these three nations, the Shuswap, formerly held the territory between the Jasper Forest Park, at the headquarters of the Athabasca river, in the north, and the Fraser, Thompson, and Columbia rivers. With the exception of the country of the Thompson River Indians, in the neighbourhood of the river bearing the same name, the Okanagan tribes occupied the corresponding stretch of land to the south, including a part of northern Washington.

The total Salish population in Canada is now over ten thousand. That of the Shuswap slightly exceeds two thousand, a decrease of one-half in the past fifty years.

Two small Shuswap bands are now settled, the first near Arrow Lake, south of Revelstoke Park, the other, originally from Shuswap Lake, in the Lake Windermere district.

THE ATHAPASCAN

Of the many Athapaskan or Déné nations at least four are represented in the north of the Canadian National Parks. These are the Sarsi, the Beaver or Castor, the Carrier, and the Sikanie (Sékanais).

While the Sarsi and the Beaver live east of the mountains and belong to the eastern group of Déné, the Carrier and Sikanie are plateau Indians in British Columbia and belong to the north-western group of Déné.

The Athapaskan linguistic stock is, with the Algonkin, the most widely distributed stock in America. Extending from the interior of Alaska to New Mexico, the Athapaskan tribes have retained a remarkable uniformity in their language, although they have readily assimilated other elements of culture from their highly differentiated neighbours. If there is a wide gap, on the plains, between the Athapaskan or Déné of Canada and their kinsmen in the United States, it is no doubt partly due to the sweeping migrations of many eastern tribes towards the plains. The warlike Cree, in the north, have spread from Hudson Bay to the Peace River and the headwaters of the Athapasca. Without offering any resistance, the timorous and unwarlike Déné were gradually pushed away to the north-west. The Kootenay, the Assiniboine, and the Blackfoot, meanwhile, were moving into the plains, thereby displacing the earlier occupants.

The Sarsi, whose hunting grounds were situated in the neighbourhood of what is now the Jasper Forest

Park, are divided into five bands, the Blood, the Broad-grass, Uterus, Young-Buffalo-Robe and People-who-hold-aloof. They now number in all less than a hundred and fifty, and live on a reserve near Calgary. When, long ago, they separated from their own nation —the Beaver or Castor—the Sarsi migrated southward, according to their own legendary account, and became the friends and protégés of the Blackfoot, with whom they have ever since been closely associated. Their tradition relates that their ancestors were once crossing a lake in the north. A boy happened to lay his hand on a buffalo horn sticking out of the ice, and it remained attached to it. When it was hit, the ice broke and drifted away. Some of the people therefore remained in the north. Others, who had already passed, went south, and became the Sarsi. Those who were engulfed in the lake became the monsters now living in the water.

Sources and References

Sources and References

INTRODUCTION.

Mr. Kihn's experiences among the Stonies, the Kootenays and the Nootkas as here described were related by himself to the author.

A short account of Calf-Child's life and activities was obtained in 1922 on the Sarcee Reserve, near Edmonton, by Mr. Diamond Jenness, of the Victoria Memorial Museum, Ottawa.

I.—AN INDIAN SEER.

This chapter is based on five narratives recorded by the author among the Carrier and Gitksan tribes of the interior of British Columbia. The existence of a similar tradition was also noted among the Kwakiutl by Dr. Franz Boas and Mr. E. K. DeBeck, among the Bella Coola by Mr. T. F. McIlwraith, and previously among the Carriers by Father Morice.

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